

From the Cornhill Magazine.

WILLIE BAIRD : A WINTER IDYLL.

An old man's tale, a tale for men grey-hair'd,
Who wear, thro' second childhood, to the Lord.

'Tis two-and-thirty summers since I came
To school the village lads of Inverglenn.

My father was a shepherd old and poor,
Who, dwelling 'mong the clouds on norland hills,

His tartan plaidie on, and by his side
His sheep-dog running, reddened with the winds
That whistle saltly south from Polar seas :
I follow'd in his footsteps when a boy,
And knew by heart the mountains round our home ;

But when I went to Edinglass, to learn
At college there, I looked about the place,
And heard the murmur of the busy streets,
Around me, in a dream ; — and only saw
The clouds that snow around the mountain tops,
The mists that chase the phantom of the moon
In lonely mountain tarns, — and heard the while,

Not footsteps sounding hollow to and fro,
But winds sough-soughing thro' the woods of pine.

Time passed ; and day by day those sights and sounds

Grew fainter, — till they troubled me no more.

O Willie, Willie, are you sleeping sound ?
And can you feel the stone that I have placed
Yonder above you ? Are you dead, my doo ?
Or did you see the shining Hand that parts
The clouds above, and becks the bonnie birds,
Until they wing away, and human eyes,
That watch them till they vanish in the blue,
Droop and grow tearful ? Ay, I ken, I ken,
I'm talking folly, but I loved the child !
He was the bravest scholar in the school !
He came to teach the very dominie —
Me, with my lyart locks and sleepy heart !

O well I mind the day his mother brought
Her tiny trembling tot, with yellow hair,
Her tiny poor-clad tot six summers old,
And left him seated lonely on a form
Before my desk. He neither wept nor gloom'd ;
But waited silently, with shoeless feet
Swinging above the floor ; in wonder eyed
The maps upon the walls, the big black board,

The slates, and books, and copies, and my own
Gray hose and clumpy boots ; last, fixing gaze
Upon a monster spider's-web that filled
One corner of the whitewash'd ceiling, watch'd
The speckled traitor jump and jink about,
Till he forgot my unfamiliar eyes,
Weary and strange and old. "Come here, my bairn !"

And timid as a lamb he seedled up.

"What do they call ye ?" "Willie," coo'd the wean,

Up-peeping slyly, scraping with his feet.

I put my hand upon his yellow hair,
And cheer'd him kindly. Then I bade him lift
The small black bell that stands behind the door

And ring the shouting laddies from their play.

"Run, Willie !" And he ran, and eyed the bell,

Stoop'd o'er it, seemed afraid that it would bite,

Then grasped it firm, and as it jingled gave

A timid cry—next laugh'd to hear the sound—

And ran full merry to the door and rang,

And rang, and rang, while lights of music lit

His pallid cheek, till, shouting, panting hard,

In ran the big rough laddies from their play.

Then rapping sharply on the desk I drove
The laddies to their seats, and beckon'd up
The stranger—smiling, bade him seat himself
And hearken to the rest. Two weary hours
Buzz-buzz, boom-boom, went on the noise of school,

While Willie sat and listen'd open mouth'd ;
Till school was over, and the big and small
Flew home in flocks. But Willie staid behind.
I beckon'd to the mannoch with a smile,
And took him on my knee and crack'd and talk'd.

First he was timid ; next, grew bashful ; next,
He warm'd and told me stories of his home,
His father, mother, sisters, brothers, all ;
And how, when strong and big, he meant to buy

A gig to drive his father to the kirk ;
And how he longed to be a dominie :
Such simple prattle as I plainly see
You smile at. But to little children God
Has given wisdom and mysterious power
Which beat the Mathematics. *Quarere*

Verum in sylvis Academi, Sir,
Is meet for men who can afford to dwell
For ever in a garden, reading books
Of mortals and the logic. Good and well !
Give me such tiny truths as only bloom
Like red-tipt gowans at the hallanstone.
Or kindle softly, flashing bright at times,
In fuffing cottage fires !

The laddie still
Was seated on my knee, when at the door
We heard a scrape-scape-scaping: Willie
prick'd
His ears and listen'd, then he clapt his hands—
"Hey! Donald, Donald, Donald!" (See!
the rogue
Looks up and blinks his eyes—he knows his
name!)
"Hey, Donald, Donald!" Willie cried. At
that,
I saw beneath me, at the door, a dog—
The very collie dozing at your feet,
His nose between his paws, his eyes half closed.
At sight of Willie, with a joyful bark
He leapt and gamboll'd, eyeing me the while
In queer suspicion; and the mannoch peeped
Into my face, while patting Donald's back—
"It's Donald! he has come to take me home!"

An old man's tale, a tale for men gray-hair'd,
Who wear, thro' second childhood, to the
grave!
I'll hasten on. Thenceforward Willie came
Daily to school, and daily to the door
Came Donald trotting; and they homeward
went
Together—Willie walking slow but sure,
And Donald trotting sagely by his side.
(Ay, Donald, he is dead! be still, old man!)

What link existed, human or divine,
Between the tiny tot six summers old,
And yonder life of mine upon the hills
Among the mists and storms? 'tis strange,
'tis strange!

But when I look'd on Willie's face, it seemed
That I had known it in some beauteous life
That I had left behind me in the north.
This fancy grew and grew, till oft I sat—
The school buzz-buzzing round me—and would
seem

To be among the mists, the tracks of rain,
Nearing the hueless silence of the snow.
Slowly and surely I began to feel
That I was all alone in all the world,
And that my mother and my father slept
Far, far away, in some forgotten kirk—
Remember'd but in dreams. Alone at nights,
I read my Bible more, and Euclid less.
For, mind you, like my betters, I had been
Half scoffer, half believer; on the whole,
I thought the life beyond a useless dream,
Best left alone, and shut my eyes to things
That puzzled mathematics. But at last
When Willie Baird and I grew friends, and
thoughts

Came to me from beyond my father's grave,
I found 'twas pleasant late at e'en to read
My Bible—haply, only just to pick
Some easy chapter for my pet to learn—
Yet night by night my soul was guided on
Like a blind man some angel hand conveys.

I cannot frame in speech the thoughts that
filled
This gray old brow, the feelings dim and warm

That sooth'd the throbbing of this weary heart!
But when I placed my hand on Willie's head,
Warm sunshine tingled from the yellow hair
Thro' trembling fingers to my blood within;
And when I looked in Willie's stainless eyes
I saw the empty ether floating gray
O'er shadowy mountains murmuring low with
winds;
And often when, in his old fashion'd way,
He question'd me, I seemed to hear a voice
From far away, that mingled with the cries
Haunting the regions where the round red sun
Is all alone with God among the snow.

Who made the stars? and if within his hand
He caught and held one, would his fingers
burn?

If I, the gray-hair'd dominie, was dug
From out a cabbage garden such as he
Was found in? if, when bigger, he would wear
Gray homespun hose and clumsy boots like
mine,
And have a house to dwell in all alone?
Thus would he question, seated on my knee,
While Donald (wheesh, old man!) stretched
lyart limbs

Under my chair, contented. Open-mouth'd
He hearken'd to the tales I loved to tell
About Sir William Wallace and the Bruce,
And the sweet lady on the Scottish throne,
Whose crown was colder than a band of ice,
Yet seem'd a sunny crown whene'er she smil-
led;

With many tales of genii, giants, dwarfs,
And little folks, that play at jing-a-ring
On beds of harebells 'neath the silver moon;
Stories and rhymes and songs of Wonder-land;
How Tammas Ercildoune in Elfland dwelt,
How Galloway's mermaid comb'd her golden
hair,
How Tammas Thumb stuck in the spider's-
web,
And fought and fought, a needle for his sword,
Dyeing his weapon in the crimson blood
Of the foul traitor with the poison'd fangs!

And when we read the Holy Book, the child
Would think and think o'er parts he loved the
best;

The draught of fish, the Child that sat so wise
In the great Temple, Herod's cruel law
To slay the weans, or—oftenest of all—
The crucifixion of the Good Kind Man
Who loved the weans and was a wean himself.
He speir'd of death; and were the sleepers cold
Down in the dark wet earth? and was it God
That put the grass and flowers in the kirk-yard?
What kind of dwelling-place was heaven above?
And was it full of flowers? and were there
schools

And dominies there? and was it far away?
Then, with a look that made your eyes grow
dim,
Clasping his wee white hands round Donald's
neck,
"Do doggies gang to heaven?" he would
ask;

"Would Donald gang?" and keek'd in Donald's face,

While Donald blink'd with meditative gaze,
As if he knew full brawly what we said,
And ponder'd o'er it, wiser far than we.
But how I answer'd, how explain'd these things,
I know not. Oft I could not speak at all.
Yet every question made me think of things
Forgotten, puzzled so, and when I strove
To reason puzzled me so much the more,
That, flinging logic to the winds, I went
Straight onward to the mark in Willie's way,
Took most for granted, laid down premises
Of Faith, imagined, gave my wit the reins,
And oft on nights at e'en, to my surprise,
Felt palpably an angel's glowing face
Glimmering down upon me, while mine eyes
Dimm'd their old orbs with tears that came
unbid

To bear the glory of the light they saw.

So summer passed. Yon chestnut at the door

Scatter'd its burnish'd leaves and made a sound
Of wind among its branches. Every day
Came Willie, seldom going home again
Till near the sunset: wet or dry he came:
Oft in the rainy weather carrying
A big umbrella, under which he walked —
A little fairy in a parachute,
Blown hither, thither, at the wind's wild will.
Pleased was my heart to see his pallid cheeks
Were gathering rosy-posies, that his eyes
Were softer and less sad. Then, with a gust,
Old winter tumbled shrieking from the hills,
His white hair blowing in the wind.

The house

Where Willie's mother lives is scarce a mile
From yonder hallan, if you take a cut
Before you reach the village, crossing o'er
Green meadows till you reach the road again;
But he who thither goes along the road
Loses a reaper's mile. The summer long
Wee Willie came and went across the fields:
He loved the smell of flowers and grass, the
sight

Of cows and sheep, the changing stalks of
wheat,

And he was weak and small. When winter
came,

Still caring not a straw for wind or rain
Came Willie and the collie; till by night
Down fell the snow, and fell three nights and
days,

Then ceased. The ground was white and ankle-
deep;

The window of the school was threaded o'er
With flowers of hueless ice — Frost's unseen
hands

Prick'd you from head to foot with tingling
heat;

The shouting urchins, yonder on the green,
Played snowballs. In the school a cheery
fire

Was kindled every day, and every day
When Willie came he had the warmest seat,

And every day old Donald, punctual, came
To join us after labour in the lowe.

Three days and nights the snow had mistily
fall'n,
It lay long miles along the country-side,
White, awful, silent. In the keen cold air
There was a hush, a sleepless silentness,
And mid it all, upraising eyes, you felt
God's breath upon your face; and in your
blood,
Though you were cold to touch, was flaming
fire,
Such as within the bowels of the earth
Burnt at the bones of ice, and wreath'd them
round
With grass ungrown.

One day in school I saw,
Through threaded window-panes, soft, snowy
flakes,
Swim with unquiet motion, mistily, slowly,
At intervals; but when the boys were gone,
And in ran Donald with a dripping nose,
The air was clear and gray as glass. An hour
Sat Willie, Donald, and myself around
The murmuring fire, and then with tender hand
I wrapt a comforter round Willie's throat,
Button'd his coat around him close and warm,
And off he ran with Donald, happy-eyed,
And merry, leaving fairy prints of feet
Behind him on the snow. I watch'd them
fade
Round the white curve, and, turning with a
sigh,
Came in to sort the room and smoke a pipe
Before the fire. Here, dreamingly and alone,
I sat and smoked, and in the fire saw clear
The norland mountains, white and cold with
snow,
That crumbled silently, and moved, and
changed, —
When suddenly the air grew sick and dark,
And from the distance came a hollow sound,
A murmur like the moan of far-off seas.

I started to my feet, look'd out, and knew
The winter wind was whistling from the clouds
To lash the snow-clothed plain, and to myself
I prophesied a storm before the night.
Then with an icy pain, an eldritch gleam,
I thought of Willie; but I cheer'd my heart,
"He's home, and with his mother, long ere
this!"

While thus I stood the hollow murmur grew
Deeper, the wold grew darker, and the snow
Rush'd downward, whirling in a shadowy mist.
I walked to yonder door and opened it.
Whirl! the wind swung it from me with a clang,
And in upon me with an iron-like crash
Swoop'd in the drift. With pinch'd sharp face
I gazed
Out on the storm! Dark, dark, was all! A
mist,
A blinding, whirling mist, of chilly snow,
The falling and the driven; for the wind

Swept round and round in clouds upon the earth,
And birm'd the deathly drift aloft with moans,
Till all was swooning darkness. Far above
A voice was shrieking, like a human cry.

I closed the door, and turn'd me to the fire,
With something on my heart—a load—a sense
Of an impending pain. Down the broad lum
Came melting flakes that hiss'd upon the coal,
Under my eyelids blew the blinding smoke;
And for a time I sat like one bewitch'd,
Still as a stone. The lonely room grew dark,
The flickering fire threw phantoms of the snow
Along the floor and on the walls around.
The melancholy ticking of the clock
Was like the beating of my heart. But, hush!
Above the moaning of the wind I heard
A quick scrape-scraping at the door; my heart
Stood still and listened; and with that there
rose

An awsome howl, shrill as a dying screech,
And scrape-scrape-scrape, the sound beyond the
door!

I could not think—I could not breathe—a
dark,

Awful foreboding gript me like a hand,
As opening the door I gazed straight out,
Saw nothing, till I felt against my knees
Something that moved and heard a moaning
sound.—

Then, pausing, moaning o'er the threshold
leapt

Donald the dog, alone, and white with snow.

Down, Donald! down, old man! Sir, look
at him!

I swear he knows the meaning of thy words,
And tho' he cannot speak, his heart is full!
See, now! see, now! he puts his cold black
nose

Into my palm and whines! he knows, he
knows!

Would speak, and cannot, but he minds that
night!

The terror of my heart seem'd choking me:
Dumbly I started and wildly at the dog,
Who gazed into my face and whined and
moan'd,

Loup'd at the door, then touched me with his
paws,

And lastly, gript my coat between his teeth,
And pulled and pulled—whiles growling, whi-
ning whiles—

Till fairly madden'd in bewilder'd fear,
I let him drag me through the banging door
Out to the whirling storm. Bareheaded, wild,
The wind and snow-drift beating on my face,
Blowing me hither, thither, with the dog,
I dashed along the road. What followed
seemed

An eerie, eerie dream! a world of snow,
A sky of wind, a whirling howling mist
Which swam around with hundred sickly eyes;

And Donald dragging, dragging, beaten,
bruised,

Leading me on to something that I feared—
An awful something, and I knew not what!
On, on, and further on, and still the snow
Whirling, the tempest moaning! Then I mind
Of groping, groping in the shadowy light,
And Donald by me burrowing with his nose
And whining. Next a darkness, blank and
deep!

But then I mind of tearing thro' the storm,
Stumbling and tripping, blind and deaf and
dumb,

And holding to my heart an icy load
I clutch'd with freezing fingers. Far away—
It seem'd long miles on miles away—I saw
A yellow light—unto that light I tore—
And last; remember opening a door
And falling, dazzled by a blinding gleam
Of human faces and a flaming fire,
And with a crash of voices in my ears
Fading away into a world of snow.

When I awaken'd to myself, I lay
In my own bed at home. I started up
As from an evil dream and look'd around,
And to my side came one, a neighbour's wife,
Mother to two young lads I taught in school.
With hollow, hollow voice I question'd her,
And soon knew all: how a long night had passed
Since, with a lifeless laddie in my arms,
I stumbled horror-stricken, swooning, wild,
Into a ploughman's cottage: at my side,
My coat between his teeth, a dog; and how
Senseless and cold I fell. Thence, when the
storm

Had passed away, they bore me to my home.
I listen'd dumbly, catching at the sense;
But when the woman mention'd Willie's name,
And I was fear'd to phrase the thought that
rose,
She saw the question in my tearless eyes
And told me—he was dead.

'Twould weary you

To tell the thoughts, the fancies, and the
dreams

That weigh'd upon me, ere I rose in bed,
But little harm'd, and sent the wife away,
Rose, slowly drest, took up my staff and went
To Willie's mother's cottage. As I walked,
Though all the air was calm and cold and still,
The blowing wind and dazzled snow were yet
Around about. I was bewildered like!
Ere I had time to think I found myself
Beside a truckle bed, and at my side
A weeping woman. And I clench'd my hands,
And look'd on Willie, who had gone to sleep.

In death-gown white, lay Willie fast asleep,
His blue eyes closed, his tiny fingers clinch'd,
His lips apart a wee as if he breath'd,
His yellow hair kaim'd back, and on his face
A smile—yet not a smile—a dim pale light
Such as the Snow keeps in its own soft wings.
Ay, he had gone to sleep, and he was sound!

And by the bed lay Donald watching still,
And when I look'd, he whined, but did not move.

I turned in silence, with my nails stuck deep
In my clenched palms; but in my heart of hearts
I prayed to God. In Willie's mother's face
There was a cold and silent bitterness —
I saw it plain, but saw it in a dream,
And cared not. So I went my way, as grim
As one who holds his breath to slay himself.
What followed that is vague as was the rest:
A winter day, a landscape hush'd in snow,
A weary wind, a horrid whiteness borne
On a man's shoulder, shapes in black, o'er all
The solemn clanging of an iron bell,
And lastly me and Donald standing both
Beside a tiny mound of fresh-heap'd earth,
And while around the snow began to fall
Mistily, softly, thro' the icy air,
Looking at one another, dumb and old.

And Willie's dead! — that's all I comprehend —

"HE WHO FIGHTS AND RUNS AWAY."

SIR, — In your paper of the 11th inst. you review "Familiar Words," by J. Hain Friswell, and say, "Thus the lines quoted by Goldsmith in his 'Art of Poetry on a New Plan,'

'For he who fights and runs away
May live to fight another day,
But he who is in battle slain
Can never rise and fight again,'

are assigned also to Sir J. Mennis, in 'Musarum Deliciæ, 12mo, 1646,' and there is no reference at all to their place in Butler's 'Hudibras.' Why should there be any reference to 'Hudibras'? I don't think you'll find the lines there. Goldsmith, quoting "Hudibras" from memory, assigned to Butler four or eight lines which he never wrote.

I am, &c., GUNNER.

Dover, Feb. 12, 1865.

[The couplet of "Hudibras" is in Part III. of Canto III., lines 243, 4.

For those that fly may fight again,
Which he can never do that's slain.

The reference to this seemed to us obvious. One reading is clearly varied from the other. We were surprised to see Sir John Mennis cited as having used the other reading thirty-two years before the first publication of Part III. of "Hudibras;" but his "Wit Restored," if not the "Musarum Deliciæ," varied as to its contents in different editions, and we only knew that in a late reprint of both works we had never seen the lines. We have since searched three times through the little volume of "Musarum Deliciæ" (Ed. 1656), and failed to find them. In two varying editions of the "Wit Restored" we have also looked without success for such a passage. Aulus Gellius used always to be a familiar author among lovers of odd reading, and

Ay, bonnie Willie Baird has gone before:
The school, the tempest, and the eerie pain,
Seem but a dream, — and I am weary like.
I begged old Donald hard — they gave him me —
And we have lived together in this house
Long years with no companions. There's no need
Of speech between us. Here we dumbly bide,
But know each other's sorrow — and we both
Feel weary. When the nights are long and cold,
And snow is falling as it falleth now,
And wintry winds are moaning, here I dream
Of Willie and the unfamiliar life
I left behind me on the norland hills!
"Do doggies gang to heaven?" Willie asked,
What learned Solomon of modern days
Can answer that? Yet here at nights I sit,
Reading the Book, with Donald at my side;
And stooping with the Book upon my knee,
I sometimes gaze in Donald's patient eyes —
So sad, so human, though he cannot speak —
And think he knows that Willie is at peace,
Far far away beyond the norland hills,
Beyond the silence of the untrodden snow.

Butler may have taken the thought from the once well-known Greek verse — "versu illo notissimo" — with which Demosthenes is said in the "Noctes Atticæ" to have answered one who reproached him for his flight from Cheronea:

Ἀνὴρ δ' ἐφύγων καὶ πόλεω μαχίσσεται.

of which the first line in Butler's couplet is an almost exact translation. — Ed. Examiner.]

An important discovery has been made by Mr. B. B. Woodward, the Queen's Librarian at Windsor. It is no other than some documents and letters of Prince Charles Edward (the young Pretender), who secretly visited London in the year 1750, and made a profession of Protestantism which has been a sore puzzle to those of our historians who have dealt with this period. These papers were discovered amongst some thousands of letters written or collected by the Stuart family during their exile, and were acquired by George IV., when Prince Regent, in part by purchase, and in part by the gift of Cardinal Gonsalvi. They are now all being arranged and catalogued, and very soon students of history will be enabled to consult them for fresh particulars of the period, 1716-1770. The professions of Protestantism made by the young Pretender are extremely curious. They occur on scraps of paper as though they were the jottings of idle moments, and do not always show a very correct acquaintance with the English tongue. These, for instance, are curious: —

"Papish, Irish, such is fools,
Such as them Cant be my 'Tools."

"I hete all prists, and the regions they rein in,
from the pope at Rome to the papists of Britain."

From Macmillan's Magazine.

EARLY YEARS OF ERASMUS.

BY JAMES HAMILTON, D.D., F.L.S.

THERE is a little town near Rotterdam which the English call Gouda, and which is known in Holland as Tergouw. Famous for a great church with painted windows, it was once famous for its tobacco-pipes, and is still renowned for its cheeses. But at the distant day to which our story goes back there were no pipes, for as yet there was no tobacco, and the Brothers Crabeth had not yet glorified the Jans Kerk with their translucent jewelry. There then lived at Gouda an old couple, Helias and Catherine, who, although they had no daughter, rejoiced in ten sons. Of these, the youngest save one was bright and clever, brimming over with mirth, a beautiful penman and a capital scholar, and, by reason of his wit and exuberant spirits, a great favourite with his companions. He had become warmly attached to a physician's daughter, but he was not allowed to marry her. At that time, where sons were very numerous, it was a favourite plan to send one into a convent, thus making the best of both worlds; for, whilst a handsome amount of merit was credited to the family at large, the earthly inheritance made a better dividend among the secular members. For carrying out this excellent arrangement Gerrit was deemed most suitable. As a monk he could turn to the best account his Latin and his clerical hand; but from the cloister his gay temperament and strong affections were utterly abhorrent. Marriage or no marriage, his attachment to the physician's daughter still continued, and vows of indissoluble union passed between them. At last poor Margaret disappeared from Gouda and places where she was known; and by-and-by in the city of Rotterdam a hapless babe made its forlorn and unwelcome entrance into the world, as it is said another had done in circumstances too similar some time beforehand.*

When we were last in Rotterdam, standing in the Groot Markt in front of a statue inscribed, "Here rose the mighty sun," &c., we thought of that dim and unlikely morning when he first peeped forth on the unsuspecting city. Amongst the peasantry and greengrocers it was of no use to look out for

* The best biographer of Erasmus, Hess, (Zürich, 1790, erste Hälfte, p. 26) argues against the existence of this brother; but there is no withstanding the minute details of the well-known epistle to Grunnius, *Erasmii Opp.* iii. col. 1321-1325, confirmed as they are by the casual allusion in the letter to Heemstede, where he says, "the death of my own brother did not overwhelm me; the loss of Froben is more than I can bear," *Opp.* iii. col. 1053 (Amsterdam edition, 1783).

faces resembling the statue; but, with its round cheeks and padded cap, a little creature lay asleep in a wheelbarrow amongst cabbages and onions, and we fancied that Erasmus, when six months old, must have looked very like his little compatriot. "Where is the house of Erasmus?" we asked a policeman; and, in that variety of the Aberdonian called Dutch, he made answer, "Daar is de man," pointing to the statue, "en hier is 't huis waar hij geboren war," at the same time conducting us a few steps till we were opposite a narrow building in the Breede Kerksteeg. Here, too, there was a tiny statue in front, much in the same style as on John Knox's house in the Canongate, and under it a halting hexameter, "Small is the house, yet within it was born the immortal Erasmus."*

We know that it was on the 28th of October that this event took place, and at three in the morning; but the year has been disputed. His own impressions on the subject seem to have fluctuated a little; or, rather, as he advanced in life he seems to have found reason for believing that he was not so young by a year or two as he had once supposed. The preponderance of proof is in favour of 1465. Assuming this date as correct, the present year brings us to his fourth centenary.†

* "Hæc est parva domus, magnus quæ natus Erasmus."

† The date given above is that which has been adopted by Hallam, "Literature of Europe," sixth edition, vol. i. p. 292, although Baye, Jortin, and almost all the biographers of Erasmus, following the inscription on his statue at Rotterdam, have set down 1467. At one period of his life this latter date was accepted by himself. In his poem on "Old Age," composed in 1507, he says that he will not be forty till October next:—

"nec adhuc Phœbeus orbi
Quadrages revoxit
Natalem lucem, quæ bruma ineunte calendas
Quinta anteit Novembreis."
Opp. iv. col. 756.

But subsequently it would seem that he had found reason to throw his birth-year farther back. He writes to Budæus, Feb. 15, 1518, "If neither of us err in our calculation, there is not much difference in our age: I am in my fifty-first year (*siquidem ego jam annum ago primum et quinquagimum*) and you say that you are not far from your fifty-second." *Opp.* iii. 178 B. Again, in a letter to Gratian, March 15, 1528, "as for my age, I think that I have now reached the year in which Tully died." *Opp.* iii. 1067 B. In that case he could not have been born later than 1465: for it was in his sixty-fourth year that Cicero died. No doubt his "arbitror" in the passage last quoted, and similar expressions elsewhere, show that his own mind was not quite clear on the subject; but they also show that he had found reason to suspect that he was older than he fancied: when he wrote his poem on "Old Age." The inscription on his tomb at Basil speaks of him as dying in 1536, "jam septuagenarius," and his friend and biographer, Beatus Rhenanus, says, "He had reached his

It was the fashion of that time for scholars to "cover with well-sounding Greek" or Latin the names of their harsh vernacular. The French *Petit* was *Parvus*; the English *Fisher* was translated into *Piscator*, and *Bullock* became *Bovillus*; and Dutch and German cultivators of the learned languages escaped from their native *Van Horn*, *de Hondt*, *Neuenaar*, *Rabenstein*, *Reuchlin*, *Hussgen* (= *Hauschein*), *Schwarzerd*, into the more euphonious *Ceratinus*, *Canius*, *De Novâ Aquilâ* or *Neoaëtos*, *Coracopetra*, *Capnio*, *Eccolampadius*, *Melanchthon*. In the same way, when our hero grew up, believing that his own and his father's name had something to do with amiability or fondness,* — he made *Gerrit Gerritsoon* for ever classical as *DESIDERIUS ERASMUS*. To the second name exception has been taken by the adherents of jots and tittles, and in his old age he tacitly conceded that the insertion of an iota would have made it better Greek, when he christened his little godson *Erasmus Froben*. However, in behalf of his own earlier choice, it must be remembered that he had good authority. Long before his day there was a saint called *Erasmus*, whose castle has for many ages stood the guardian of *Naples Bay* and city, and who still on dark nights hangs out from the mast-head his lantern to warn Mediterranean seamen of the coming tempest. *Elmo* is a liquefaction of the harsher *Erasmus*, and no doubt the electric saint was present to the thoughts of the young Dutchman when he exchanged his

seventieth year, which the prophet *David** has assigned as the ordinary limit of man's life: at least, he had not far exceeded it; for as to the year in which he was born amongst the *Batavians* we are not quite sure, though sure of the day, which was the 28th of October, the festival of *St. Simon* and *St. Jude*." Whatsoever may have been the circumstances which led him in later life to alter his estimate of his own age and add to it two years, we cannot but feel that the presumptions are in favour of 1465; and one advantage of the earlier date is that it renders more intelligible, we might say more credible, some incidents recorded of his boyhood. We do not know how long he was a chorister at *Urecht*, but it is easier to believe that he was eleven than nine when he ceased to be a singing boy; and if, instead of thirteen, we suppose him to have been fifteen when his father died, we can better understand how before leaving *Deventer* he had got the whole of *Horace* and *Terence* by heart, and had already mastered the *Dialectics* of *Petrus Hispanus* (see *Opp.* iii. 1822 F.).

* In German *Gerhard* = *Gernhaber* = *Liebhaber*. See Herzog's "*Realwörterbuch*," Art. *Erasmus*. And we may add that *Erastus*, so famous in ecclesiastical controversy, was born *Thomas Lieberor Lieber*. But *Miss Yonge*, in the "*History of Christian Names*," vol. i. p. 255, repudiates this interpretation of the German *Gerhard* (in Dutch, *Gerrit*). According to her it really is "stern war," or "strong spear."

* The ninety-h Psalm is usually ascribed not to *David* but *Moses*; see its title.

patronymic, and to his own good Greek preferred the good name of the Italian tutelary.

Tired out by the resistance of his relatives, and despairing of being ever lawfully wedded to his *Margaret*, before the birth of *Erasmus*, *Gerrit*, the father, left his home at *Gouda* and wrote to his parents that he would return no more. He went as far as *Rome*. Here his caligraphy served him in good stead. Printing was still a new invention, and an excellent income could be earned by copying books. At the same time he went on to study law and improve himself in Greek — most likely with a secret hope that he might some day go back a travelled scholar and an independent man, and claim his affianced. That hope was rudely crushed. A letter came announcing that *Margaret* was gone. There was now no reason why he should continue to withstand parental urgency. The tie which held him to the secular life was broken; he renounced the world, and was ordained a priest.

Time passed on, and he returned to *Gouda*, no longer to set the village in a roar with fun and frolic, but a sober ecclesiastic, under his sacred vestments bringing back the contrition of the penitent as well as the tender grief of the mourner. Here, however, a surprise awaited him. With a frightful shock of joy and consternation he found *Margaret* still living. The letter of his brothers had been a lie, but the lie had fulfilled its purpose. It had caused the despairing lover to leap the chasm which, in a moment crossed, now yawned a great gulf betwixt himself and the object of his affection; and, although he would have now gladly made reparation for his grievous wrong, and although history records that, the fatal error excepted, she was good and gentle and all that could be wished for in a wife, the vows of *Rome* were on him, and he kept them with stern bitterness, crushing down his own affection, and leaving her to a lot more sad than any widowhood.

Still to poor *Margaret* there was beguilement in the little boy, all the rather that *Gerrit* loved his child, and supplied the means for her own honourable maintenance; and, for the few years that she was spared to him, we have the testimony of her son that she was a fond and devoted mother.

Four hundred years ago there were no kinder-gartens nor infant-schools; and, although there was a very good Sunday picture-book, called the "*Biblia Pauperum*," it was not every household that could afford a copy. So the food for infant minds con-

sisted very much of the fairy-tales which long floated, life-like and real, through the nurseries of Europe, but which the babies of the future will only know from the specimens bottled up by Dr. Dasent, or pinned down by the Brothers Grimm. The religious instruction was in keeping. It told the wonderful adventures of saints who, when decapitated, picked up their own heads and walked off with them, or who crossed the sea, making a sail of their cloak, and a boat of an old shoe or a mill-stone. The better portion was taken from those Gospels of the Infancy, of which Professor Longfellow, in his "Golden Legend," has given an example.* To many minds these tales are simply painful. Not only are they offensive as additions to that which is written, but impious from the way in which sacred things are dragged down to a low and trivial level. Nevertheless, those who can throw themselves back into a rude and homely age, and make due allowance for an unlettered people, under forms very grotesque will still detect a large amount of good feeling, and perchance may agree with us that it was from these Christmas carols and cradle-hymns, sung by soft maternal voices, rather than from purgatorial pictures and the fulminations of preaching friars, that the little Gerrits of that time were likely to get a glimpse of the "gentle Jesus, meek and mild"—represented, as He usually is, in the manger, smiling up to the ox and the ass, who on that cold night are trying with their breath to keep Him warm. From the rhymes which played the part of "Peep of Day" to little Hollanders four centuries ago we select the following:—

FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.

The gentle babe in Mary's arms
The kindly colt was bearing,
When lo! they see a stately tree
Its laden head uprearing.

"Stay, stay, good colt, till the dates we gather,
For you and I are weary;"
The palm-tree stooped, and its clusters drooped
Right down to the arms of Mary.

The dates she plucked till Joseph said—
"The day is passing o'er us;
O Mary, haste, nor more time waste;
We've forty miles before us."

They journeyed on, and the brightening sun
Them soon to Egypt brought;
A goodly land is Egypt strand,
Where Joseph refuge sought.

* "The Nativity: a Miracle Play."

Before a glittering gate they stood,
Where a rich man kept his revel;
With flaunt and flout he drove them out,
And wished them to the devil.

At a poor man's door next Joseph begged,
When they had passed that other;
"O mistress mild, receive this child,
And eke his weary mother."

With welcome blithe she took them in
From night and all its dangers,
And in the shed they sought a bed,
Those holy far-come strangers.

To's wife then said the host, as sleep
He strove in vain to cherish,
"I greatly fear that infant dear
In this keen frost will perish."

On the kitchen hearth, as up she sprang,
The flame leaped up as cheerful:
"O lady dear, thy babe bring here,
The frost this night is fearful."

Whilst o'er the fire the fragrant food
Began to sing and simmer,
With glances bright her heart's delight
Met every rosy glimmer.

"O mirror clear, O baby dear,"
She sang with joyful weeping;
And to her breast the babe she pressed,
Now warm, and fed, and sleeping.

And so that host and his gracious wife
Soon rose to wondrous riches,
Whilst the son of Cain for bread was fain
To delve in dykes and ditches.

So let us give what Jesus asks
Without delay or grudging,
And let us pray that Jesus may
In all our hearts find lodging.

For where He's guest there goes it best
With all within the cottage;
For if He dine the water's wine,
And angel's food the pottage.*

In his fifth year Erasmus was sent to a school in Gouda, kept by Peter Winkel; but the fruit which grew on that tree of knowledge was harsh and crabbed, and the little pupil tasted it so sparingly that his father began to fear that learning was a thing for which he had no capacity. But,

* Of these early Dutch *Lays* and *Legends* the largest collection is the "*Niederländische Geistliche Lieder des XV. Jahrhunderts*," in the "*Horæ Belgicæ*," of Hoffman von Fallersleben (Hannover, 1854). The above specimen is an abridgment, freely translated, of No. 24, spliced at the end from the German stanzas at pp. 64, 65. Of the class of picture books referred to in the text, two examples have been reproduced in admirable facsimile by Mr. Stewart, of King William Street, viz., the "*Speculum Humane Salvationis*," and the "*Geschiedenis van het heylighe Cruys*."

although he was no great reader, he could sing; he had a sweet, melodious voice, and his mother took him to Utrecht, where the cathedral authorities received him, and put him in the choir; and in a white surplice, along with other little children, he sang the Latin psalms and anthems in the grand old church where an older lad, named Florenszoon, was then a frequent worshipper, afterwards known to history as the preceptor of Charles the Fifth, and eventually as Adrian the Sixth, the only Dutchman, if we rightly remember, who ever wore the triple crown.

At nine years he was taken to a school at Deventer, and here he began to be a scholar in earnest. Shortly before this (in July, 1471), in the neighbouring convent of St. Agnes, at Zwoll, there had fallen asleep a venerable monk, to be remembered through all time as Thomas à Kempis. He was an exquisite copyist, as is attested by a sumptuous Bible in four volumes, still preserved, and he had also laid in a good store of scholarship at this very Deventer school which Erasmus was now attending. But, above all, he was a serene and saintly man, "inwardly happy, outwardly cheerful,"* to whom the world was nothing and God was all in all, and who in his pure and passionless career held on till he was upwards of ninety, drawing towards him the love, and all but the worship of those who in him felt a nearer heaven, and who heard from his lips those lessons on the hidden life which myriads since have read in "The Imitation of Jesus." Although a reviver of devotion rather than a restorer of learning, the cause of letters owed much to Thomas, for the worst foes of knowledge are grossness and apathy; and, when men like Rudolph Agricola and Alexander Hegius came under his spell, in the spiritual quickening which ensued, if they did not soar to the like elevation of enraptured piety, they at all events were raised to a region from which the coarse joys of the convent looked contemptible, and where the higher nature began to call aloud for food convenient.

When Erasmus came to Deventer, the rector of the school was the disciple of à Kempis, Hegius, and the whole place was animated by his ardent scholarship. Erasmus was too poor to pay the fees required from the students in the rector's class, but on saints' days the lectures were gratuitous and open to all comers. However, in Sintheim he had a kind and skilful teacher. Although the royal road to learning was not yet constructed, the Deventer profes-

ors had done a good deal to smoothen and straighten the bridle-path; and, with a plank here and there thrown across the wider chasms, and with some of the worst stumbling-stones removed, a willing pupil could make wonderful progress. Even our dull little friend, who had been the despair of the pedantic Peter, woke up; and, like a creature which has at last found its element, he ramped in the rich pastures to which the gate of the Latin language admitted. As with Melancthon a few years afterwards, Terence was his favourite, and in committing to memory all his plays he laid up betimes an ample store of the pure old Roman speech, as well as a rich fund of delicate humour, and dexterous, playful expression. Sintheim was delighted. On one occasion he was so charmed with his performance that he kissed the young scholar, and exclaimed, "Cheer up; you will reach the top of the tree." And on an occasion more august, when the famous Agricola visited Deventer, and was shown an exercise of Erasmus', he was so struck with it that he asked to see the author. The bashful boy was introduced; and, taking him with both hands behind the head, so that he was compelled to look full in the face the awful stranger, Agricola, told him, "You will be a great man yet." Such a prophecy, coming from one of the oracles of the age, could never be forgotten, especially as Agricola was almost adored by Rector Hegius.

Knowledge should be its own reward; but poor human nature is very thankful for those occasional crumbs of encouragement. Nor was Erasmus above the need of them. Even at Deventer the discipline was very severe; and, although Erasmus was both a good boy and a good scholar, and his master's favourite pupil, it was impossible to pass scathless through the ordeal. In after years he did all he could to mitigate a system the savage cruelty of which was so abhorrent from his gentle nature;† and he quotes with approval the witty invention of an English gentleman, who, in order to make his son at once a scholar and a marksman, had a target painted with the Greek alphabet, and every time that the little archer hit a letter, and at the same time could name it, he was rewarded with a cherry.‡ This was an effectual plan for teaching "the young idea how to shoot;" and to the same kindly method we owe alphabets of gingerbread or sugar, which

* De *Pueris Instituendis*, published in 1529. See especially Opp. i. 485 et seq.

† Opp. i. 511.

* Ullman's *Reformers before the Reformation*, vol. ii. p. 127.

even in the nursery awaken the pleasures of taste, and make little John Bull, if not a devourer of books, at least very fond of his letters.

On the whole, however, it was a happy time which he spent at Deventer. His mother, who had accompanied him at first, watched over him with anxious tenderness; and he had attached companions, such as William Hermann. And he could play. From his Colloquies we gather that he was up to bowls, and leap-frog, and running, though not so fond of swimming. Then the Isel was famous for its fish, and he not only knew how to ensnare the finny tribe, but when bait was scarce he had a plan for bringing the worms aboveboard, by pouring over their lurking-places water in which had been steeped walnut-shells. Above all, the noble passion of learning had been awakened, and every day was bringing some new knowledge under the best instructors his native land could offer, when a great desolation overtook him. In his thirteenth year, as he himself says—although for reasons already mentioned we incline to think that he was somewhat older—the plague, then perpetually wandering over Europe, came to Deventer. It carried off his mother. It seized and destroyed many of his friends. At last it depopulated the house where he lodged, and in his grief and terror he fled to his father, at Gouda. But soon this refuge also failed. The death of Margaret had such an effect on Gerrit, whose heart was half broken already, that he immediately sickened and soon felt himself dying. He had by this time saved up enough to complete the education of his sons, and this, along with the care of the lads themselves, he entrusted to Peter Winkel and two other neighbours; and then the priest, in whom little of the facetious Gerrit survived, finished his sorrowful career—another instance that there are false steps which life can never retrace, and wrongs which repentance cannot remedy.

Erasmus was now very anxious to go to some university, but the guardians showed no great zeal in settling the affairs of the orphans. A note addressed to Magister Petrus Winkel, and undated, must have been written at this time, and is probably the earliest specimen of its author's epistolary style.

"I fear that our property is not likely to be soon realized, and I trust that you will do your utmost to prevent our being injured by delay. Perhaps you will say that I am one of those who fear lest the firmament should fall. You might laugh at my apprehensions, if the cash

were already in the coffer; but, far from being sold, the books have still to go to the auction-room, or find a purchaser. The corn has still to be sown from which our bread is to be baked; and meanwhile, as Ovid says, 'on flying foot the time flits past.' In an affair like this I cannot see the advantage of delay. Besides, I hear that Christian has not returned the books which he had borrowed. Let his tardiness be overcome by your importunity."

We have no doubt that this is the note to which Erasmus elsewhere refers as having been written to his guardian by a youth of fourteen.* If so, it exhibits a precocious talent for business, where, perhaps, we would rather have seen the bashfulness of the school-boy; but to one who carries a bar sinister on his shield the battle of life is very hard, especially at the beginning; and to this poor youth the world's experiences were becoming somewhat bleak. Like other hunted creatures, his utmost sagacity was needed for self-defence, and he had too much reason to distrust the tutorial trio. In other respects the letter is an admirable composition,† and interesting as indicating thus early his turn for proverbial philosophy and love of classical quotation. But neither good Latin nor lines from Ovid could make it palatable to the receiver. He wrote back to his ward that, if he continued to send such figurative effusions, he must subjoin explanatory notes. For his own part, he always wrote plainly and "to the point"—*punctuatim*.

Instead of the university, Erasmus was sent to a monkish school at Bois le Duc (Hertogenbosch); from which, after an irksome and unprofitable duration of nearly three years, the plague allowed him to escape. Returning to Gouda, he found that by the death of one of their number his guardians were reduced to Winkel the schoolmaster, and a mercantile brother. They had but a sorry account to give of their stewardship; and Erasmus warned his brother that a desperate attempt would assuredly be made to force them into a convent, as the shortest way of winding up the trust and closing the account. Both agreed that nothing could be more alien from their present mood of mind, the elder confessing that he had no love for a religious life, the younger being intent on that scholarship which convents could not give. "Our

* *Florentio decimum quantum annum agenti, quum illi scripsisset aliquanto politius, respondit severiter, ut si posthac mitteret tales epistolas, adjungeret commentarium: ipsi semper hunc fuisse morem, ut plane scriberet, et punctuatim, nam hoc verbo usus est.*—Opp, iii. 1822.

† It will be found in Knight's "Life of Erasmus," Appendix, p. iv.

means may be small," he said; "but let us scrape together what we can, and find our way to some college. Friends will turn up: like many before us, we may maintain ourselves by our own industry, and Providence will aid us in our honest endeavours." "Then," said the other, "you must be spokesman." Nor was it long before the scheme was propounded. In a few days Mr. Winkler called; and, after an ample preface, full of affection for them both, and dwelling on all his services, he went on, "And now I must wish you joy, for I have been so fortunate as to obtain an opening for both of you amongst the canons regular." As agreed, the younger made answer, thanking him warmly for his kindness, but saying that they thought it scarcely prudent, whilst still so young, to commit themselves to any course of life. "We are still unknown to ourselves, nor do we know the vocation you so strongly recommend. We have never been inside of a convent, nor do we know what it is to be a monk. Would it not be better to defer a decision till after a few years spent in study?" At this Mr. Winkler flew into a passion: "You don't know what you are? You're a fool. You are throwing away an excellent opportunity, which I have with much ado obtained for you. So, sirrah, I resign my trust; and now you are free to look where you like for a living." Erasmus shed tears, but stood firm. "We accept your resignation, and free you from any farther charge." Winkler went away in a rage; but, thinking better about it, he sought the assistance of his brother, who, not being a schoolmaster, was less in the habit of losing his temper. Next day they invited the young men to dinner. It was beautiful weather; they had their wine taken out to a summer-house in the garden, and under the management of the balmy and blandiloquent merchant all went smooth and merry. At last they came to business, and so engagingly did the man of money set forth the life of poverty—so bright were the pictures of abstinence and seraphic contemplation which he drew over his bottle of Rhenish—that the elder brother was quite overcome. Pretending to yield to irresistible argument, he entered the convent; but he was a thorough rogue, and carried his rascality into the cloister. He cheated even the monks, and with his scandalous misconduct, drinking and stealing, proceeded from bad to worse, and henceforth disappears from history. Erasmus, on the other hand, hungering for knowledge and intent on mental improvement, held out. Although he had never

lived in a monastery, he had attended a conventual school, and had seen the comatose effect which the cowl exercises on the head of the wearer. "In vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird;" and although the door was open, and nice barley was strewn on the threshold, inside the decoy he saw so many bats and doleful creatures as effectually scared him, and with the instinct of a true bird of Paradise he escaped away to light and freedom.

But it was not easy to resist forever. He was friendless and penniless. Besides, his health was broken; for nearly a year he had been suffering from paroxysms of quartan ague, and in the wakeful hours of night he began to wonder if it might not be better to renounce the pursuit of learning, and give himself entirely to prepare for eternity. Whilst in this state of feeling he fell in with a youth who had been his school-fellow at Deventer, and who was now an inmate of the convent of Steene, near Gouda. Cornelius Berden drew a glowing picture of conventual retirement. He enlarged on the peace and harmony reigning within the sacred walls, where worldly strifes and passions never entered, and where, careful for nothing, but serving God and loving one another, the brethren led lives like the angels. Above all, he expatiated on the magnificent library and the unlimited leisure, and so wrought on his younger companion that he consented to come in as a novice. For the first months it was all very pleasant; he was not expected to fast, nor to rise for prayers at night, and every one was particularly kind to the new-comer; and, although before the year had expired he saw many things which he did not like, and some which awakened his suspicion, he was already within the gates, and it was not easy to get away. If he hinted to any one his fear that neither in mind nor body was he fitted to become a monk, he was at once assured that these were mere temptations of Satan, and, if he would only defy the devil by taking the final step, these difficulties would trouble him no more. The awful word "apostate" was whispered in his ear, and he was reminded how, after thus putting his hand to the plough and turning back, one novice had been struck by lightning, another had been bitten by a serpent, and a third had fallen into a frightful malady. As he afterwards pathetically urges, "If there had been in these fathers a grain of true charity, would they not have come to the succour of youth and inexperience? Knowing the true state of the case, ought they not to have

said, "My son, it is foolish to carry this effort any farther. You do not agree with this mode of life, nor does it agree with you. Choose some other. Christ is everywhere — not here only; — and in any garb you may live religiously. Resume your freedom: so shall you be no burden to us, nor shall we be your undoing." But with these anglers it was not the custom when they had hooked a fish to throw them back into the water. They worked on his generous and sensitive spirit by asking, How can you as a renegade ever lift up your head amongst your fellow-men? And in pride and desperation he did as had been done by his father before him: he pressed his hands tight over his eyes and took the fatal leap. At the end of the year he made his profession as a canon regular in the Augustinian Convent of Emmaus at Steene.

It was not long before his worst forebodings were fulfilled. In the cloisters of Emmaus he found no Fra Angelico nor Thomas à Kempis, nor any one such as the name of the place might have suggested — no one who cared to "open the Scriptures," or who said to the Great Master, "Abide with us." From the genius of the place both religion and scholarship seemed utterly alien. The monks were coarse, jovial fellows, who read no book but the Breviary, and who to any feast of the Muses preferred pancakes and pots of ale. There was a library, but it was the last place where you would have sought for a missing brother. They sang their matins and vespers, and spent the intermediate time in idle lounging and scurrilous jesting. Long afterwards, when invited to return, Erasmus wrote to the prior that his only recollections of the place were "flat and foolish talking, without any savour of Christ, low carousals, and a style of life in which, if you stripped off a few formal observances, there remained nothing a good man would care to retain."* At his first entrance his disposition was devout: but he wanted to worship; it was the living God whom he sought to serve, and the genuflections, and crossings, and bell-rings, and changes of vestments seemed to him little better than an idle mummery. He had hoped for scholar-like society, but, except young Hermann from Gouda, he found none to sympathize in his tastes, or join in his pursuits. Nor did the rule of his Order agree with him. His circulation was languid, his nervous sys-

tem extremely sensitive. If called up to midnight devotions, after counting his beads and repeating the prescribed pater-nosters, a model monk would turn into bed and be asleep in five seconds; but, after being once aroused from his rest, Erasmus could only lie awake till the morning, listening to his more fortunate brethren as they snored along the corridor. For stock-fish his aversion was unconquerable. Sir Walter Scott mentions a brother clerk in the Court of Session who used to be thrown into agonies by the scent of cheese, and the mere smell of salted cod gave Erasmus a headache. And whilst by a bountiful supper his capacious colleagues were able to prepare overnight for the next day's fast, to the delicate frame of our scholar abstinence was so severe a trial that he repeatedly fainted away. No wonder then that with the love of letters, the love of reality, and the love of liberty superadded to such constitutional inaptitudes, the "heaven on earth" at Steene soon became an irksome captivity.

Not that the five years were utterly lost. True, he was disappointed in Cornelius Barden, the quondam chum whose glowing representations had first inveigled him. In the outset he was delighted with his apparent classical ardour, and rejoiced to burn with him the midnight oil, reading through a whole play of Terence at a single sitting. But it turned out that his motive was pure selfishness. He was ambitious of preferment, and, with the astuteness which he had learned during a short sojourn in Italy, he had entrapped into the convent his accomplished friend, as the cheapest way of obtaining a tutor. No wonder that, as soon as his treachery was detected, the victim bitterly resented his baseness. But, as we have already stated, in William Hermann he still found a kindred spirit. In poetical compositions and elegant Latinity they vied with one another, and any ancient treasure which either discovered they shared in common. Where the predisposition or susceptibility exists, a book read at the right time often gives an abiding complexion to the character, or a life-long direction to the faculties. The delight with which Pope when a schoolboy read Ogilby's Homer resulted in our English Iliad; and the copy of the "Faery Queen," which Cowley found on the window-seat of his mother's room, committed him to poetry for the rest of his days. In the same way Alexander Murray used to ascribe the first awakening of his polyglottal propensities to the specimens of the Lord's Prayer in many tongues which he found in Salmon's Geography, and our pleasant

* "Colloquia quam frigida, quam inepta, quam non sapientia Christum; convivia quam laica; denique tota vite ratio, cui si detraxeris ceremonias, non video quid reliquas expetendum." Opp. iii. 1527.

friend James Wilson was made a naturalist by the gift of "Three Hundred Wonderful Animals." A tendency towards scholarship our hero inherited from his father, along with his mirth and humour; and a peculiar flavour was given to his wit, as well as a tincture to his style, by his early admiration of Terence. And in the convent of Steene he found two writers who exerted a material influence on his subsequent history. One of these was Jerome, in whose letters he found such spoil that he transcribed the whole of them; and of many subsequent years it became the chosen pastime, as well as absorbing employment, to prepare for the press the collected works of this truly learned father. The other was the famous Italian, Laurentius Valla, whose "Elegancies of the Latin Language" did so much to restore to modern times the speech of ancient Rome, and whose detection of the forgery which assigned the city of the Cæsars to Sylvester as a gift from Constantine may be regarded as the first decisive blow aimed at the temporal power of the Papacy.* His critical acumen, and the skill with which he explained the niceties of a noble tongue, filled Erasmus with rapture, and the very truculence of the terrible Roman had a charm for his ardent disciple.† Not that his dispositions were at all akin. Mild in his very mischief, and never so indignant as to be indiscreet, Erasmus was not born to be either a cynic or a bully; but in minds capable of unreserved admiration there is an isomorphous tendency, and, although the constituent elements may be distinct, the style into which they crystallize becomes identical. And just as Hannah More could not help writing Johnsonese, as many a living writer nibs his pen and cuts the paper with Carlylian rhodium, so in the inspiration of our author we can sometimes detect the spell of a first love and an unconscious imitation of Valla. As a scholar and critic he was eventually no whit inferior; as a wit and a genius he immeasurably excelled. Yet through his subsequent career may be

discerned the influence of his Italian predecessor, not only in his preference of classical Latinity at large to a narrow and foppish Ciceronianism; not only in the keen-eyed shrewdness and audacious sense which saw through the frailties of popes and the flaws of tradition; not only in the courage which set to work to translate the Greek Testament anew, undaunted by the awful claims of the Vulgate; but in the vituperative energy which he threw into his later polemical writings, and which is not unworthy of the critic who was constantly snapping at the heels of Poggio, and who had nearly torn Beccadelli in pieces because his remarks on Livy had gained the best *bon-bons* at Alphonso's table.

If Steene had few rewards for its students, the restraints were not very strict which it placed on its inmates. As long as they did not interfere with the rules of the Order, they were allowed to follow freely their own tastes and likings. We have mentioned that our Desiderius had a musical voice, and that when a little boy he was a chorister in Utrecht Cathedral. For the sister art of painting he is also said to have shown an early inclination, and a painted crucifix has come down with the inscription, "Despise not this picture: it was painted by Erasmus when he lived in the convent of Steene."* Anecdotes are also current of other modes in which he occasionally enlivened his graver studies. For instance, it is told that there was a pear-tree in the orchard which monks of low degree were warned to leave untouched; for the prior had seen meet to reserve it for his own proper use. Our friend, however, having taken a private survey of the forbidden fruit, was obliged to own that in this instance his superior was right, and repeated his visits so often that the pears began to disappear with alarming rapidity. The prior determined if possible to find out the robber. For this purpose he took up his position overnight at a window which commanded the orchard. Towards morning he espied a dark figure in the tree; but, just as he made sure of catching the scoundrel, he was obliged to sneeze, and at the explosion the thief dropped from the bough, and with admirable presence of mind limped off, imitating to the life the hobble of the only lame brother in the convent. As soon as the monks were assembled for morning prayers, the prior enlarged on the dreadful sin which had been committed, and then in a

* Unless we give precedence to Dante:—

"Ah Costatin, di quanto mal fu matre
Non la tua conversion, ma quella dote
Che da te prese il primo ricco padre!"

Inferno, canto 19.

"Ah Constantine! what evil's can est to flow,
Not by conversion, but those fair domains
Thou on the first rich Father didst bestow!"

Wright.

Valla was born at Rome in 1407, where also in 1457 he died. His declamation against the Popedom did not see the light till long after his death, viz., 1492, about the time when Erasmus was taking leave of Steene.

† See his 1st, 2d, and 103d Epistles.

* What has become of it we cannot tell. In the early part of last century it belonged to Cornelius Musius of Delft. Burigny, *Vie d'Erasmus*, tome i. p. 37.

voice of thunder denounced the lame friar as the sacrilegious villain who had stolen the pears. The poor monk was petrified. Protestations of innocence and proofs of an *alibi* were unavailing; the prior with his own eyes had seen him in the fact, and we doubt if the real delinquent came forward to discharge the penance.

Erasmus had spent five years in the convent when Henri de Bergues, the Bishop of Cambray, invited him to become his secretary. The bishop was aspiring to a cardinal's hat; and, having resolved on a journey to Rome in order to secure it, he wisely judged that the accomplished Latinist, whose fame had already come to France, would materially subserve his purposes. On the other hand, Erasmus was transported at the prospect of exchanging the society of boorish monks for the refinement and scholarship which he expected to find at the headquarters of the Church and in the metropolis of Italy; and, as both Prior Werner and the Bishop of Utrecht gave their consent, somewhere about the year 1492 Erasmus took his joyful departure from Steene, and returned no more.

In its treatment of Erasmus, monasticism prepared its own Nemesis. The system was become a scandal to Europe. The greed of the friars, their indolence, their hypocrisy, their gluttony and grossness, had been for ages proverbial, and it was only with the sulky toleration of inevitable evil that their swarming legions were endured. Still it was believed that celibacy was a holy state, and it was hoped that, by way of balance to the rough exactions and tavern brawls of these sturdy beggars, there was a great deal of devotion and austerity within the cell, when there rose up a witness who could not be contradicted, proclaiming, in a voice which was heard in all lands alike by princes and people, that, offensive as was the outside of the sepulchre, it was clean compared with the interior.

Erasmus had no reason to love the institution. By working on the religious feelings of his grandparents and the avarice of their older sons, it had prevented his father from consummating in lawful wedlock an honourable attachment, and so had brought on his own birth a reproach with which the real authors of the wrong were the first to stigmatize him. And it had gone far to frustrate his own existence. Years which should have been given to letters and to religion it had doomed to dull routine and meaningless observance; nor was it unnatural that he should resent on the system the craft and chicanery which had cozened him

out of his liberty, and which, in lieu of the philosopher's cloak, had left him in a fool's cap and motley. It can therefore occasion no wonder that in subsequent years he let slip no opportunity for showing up the ignorance and heartlessness of the regular clergy. If in one aspect Luther's life was one long war with the devil, the literary career of Erasmus was a continued crusade against monkery; and it is almost amusing to notice how, whether it be any mishap which has befallen himself, or any evil which threatens the universe,—if it be a book of his own which is anonymously abused, or the peace of a family which is invaded, or a town or kingdom which is hopelessly embroiled—he is sure to suspect a friar as the source of the mischief; and, as we read page after page of his epistles, we cannot help forming the conclusion that, “going to and fro on the face of the earth,” the ubiquitous monk was to all intents our author's devil.

The years during which they kept him imprisoned at Steene supplied the materials for thoroughly exposing the system. He was then filling his portfolio with the sketches which afterwards came out in the faithful but unbeautiful portraits of the *Enchiridion* and in the caricatures of the *Colloquies*; and by the time that he had become the most popular writer of all his contemporaries the effect was prodigious. Whether in one of his pithy sentences he spoke of “purgatory as the fire which they so dearly love, for it keeps their kettle boiling,”* or sketched them at full length as the universal usurpers who appropriated the functions of prince, pastor, and bishop, so that they must have a hand in every national treaty and every matrimonial engagement—so that they constituted themselves the guardians of orthodoxy, pronouncing “such a one is a real Christian, but such another is a heretic, and he again is a heretic and a half—‘sesquihæreticus’”—worming out of the citizens their most secret thoughts and most private affairs, and making themselves so essential that, if either king or pope has any dirty work to do, he must use their unscrupulous agency—a set of busybodies at once venomous and unproductive, who, like drones furnished with hornet stings, could not be driven from the hive, but must be at once detested and endured,†—every one recognized the correctness of the picture; and, with accurate instinct, far more fiercely than against Luther, with his defiance of the Pope, and his Gospel for the people, did the

* Opp. iii. 1106.

† *Adagia*, chil. ii. cent. viii. 66.

frars rage against Erasmus and his antimonic satires. And, just as in his morning promenade under the hedgerow, a persecuted cat is followed by a cloud of titmice and sparrows, twittering out their terror, and warning all the woodland, so it is ludicrous to notice the swarm of agitated crows which eventually fluttered after Erasmus in his progress through Europe, shrieking forth their execrations, and in every stealthy movement boding new mischief to the mendicants. To pull down the columns which supported the papacy needed the passionate strength and self-devotement of Luther; but the wooden pillar on which monkery was

perched, already rotten and worm-eaten, quickly yielded to the incisors of the formidable rodent who had somehow got in; * and, when, at last, the crazy structure came down, and the "happy family" was scattered in England and Germany, it was not without a touch of compunction that the author of their overthrow witnessed the dismay of their dispersion, and the hardships which some of them endured.

* The name of Erasmus was an irresistible temptation to punning: witness the following epigram to Stephen Paschasius. —

"Hic jacet Erasmus, qui quondam bonus erat mus;
Rodere qui solitus, roditur a veribus."

THE OLD CATHEDRAL ORGANIST.

'Tis forty years since first

I climbed these dusty, winding stairs
To play the Dean in; how I spurned

Beneath my feet all meaner cares,
When first I leant, my cheek on fire,
And looked down blushing at the choir.

Handel and Haydn, and Mozart, —

I thought they watched me as I played;
While Palestrina's stern, sad face

Seemed in the twilight to upbraid;
Pale fingers moved upon the keys —
The ghost-hands of past centuries.

Behind my open battlement

Above the door I used to lean,
And watch, in puffing crimson hood,
Come stately sailing in the Dean;
On this, the organ breathing low,
Began to murmur soft and slow.

I used to shut my eyes, and hear

The solemn prophecy and psalm
Rise up like incense: and I loved
Before the prayer the lull and calm,
Till, like a stream that bursts its banks,
Broke forth brave Purcell's "O give Thanks."

I know those thirteen hundred pipes

And thirty stops, as blind men do
The voices of the friends they love,
The birds' song and the thunder too;
And the fierce diapason's roar,
Like storms upon a rocky shore.

And now to-day I yield me up

The dusky seat, my loved throne,
Unto another; and no more
Shall come here in the dusk alone,
Or in the early matin hour,
To hear my old friend's voice of power.

And yet methinks, that centuries hence,

Lying beneath the chancel floor,
In that dark nook I shall delight
To hear the anthem swell once more,
And to myself shalt quietly smile
When music floods the vaulted aisle.

— *Chambers' Journal.*

SCIENTIFIC EXPLORATION OF THE GREAT PYRAMID. — Professor C. Piazza Smyth, of the new Egyptian expedition, gives the following account of the attempt to explore the great Pyramid:

EAST TOMB, GREAT PYRAMID, }
Feb. 2, 1865. }

My dear Sir, — We have been here now about three weeks, and are settled down at last to the measuring; the chief part of time hitherto having been occupied, in concert with a party of laborers furnished by the English Government, in clearing away rubbish from important parts of the interior, and in cleansing and preparing it for nice observation.

The magnesium wire light is something astounding in its power of illuminating difficult places. With any number of wax candles which we have yet taken into either the king's chamber or the grand gallery, the impression left on the mind is merely seeing the candles and whatever is very close to them, so that you have small idea whether you are in a palace or a cottage; but burn a triple strand of magnesium wire and in a moment you see the whole apartment and appreciate the grandeur of its size and the beauty of its proportions. This effect, so admirably complete, too, as it is, and perfect in its way, probably results from the extraordinary intensity of the light, apart from its useful photographic property, for, side by side with the magnesium light, the wax candle flame looked not much brighter than the red granite of the walls of the room.

There come parties — often many parties — of visitors to see the pyramid every day without fail, and they come amply provided with all sorts of means and appliances to enjoy the sight, that is, with everything but the needful magnesium wire, and one waistcoat pocketful of what would be worth a whole donkey-load of what they do bring up to enable their souls to realize the ancient glories of the internal scene. I remain yours very truly,

C. PIAZZI SMYTH.

John Spiller, Esq., Chemical Department,
Royal Arsenal, Woolwich.

From the Cornhill Magazine.

A MIDSUMMER RIDE IN SOUTH CHINA.

THE comet of July, 1861, was glittering in a starlit sky when the writer of this paper, proceeding on certain business to the interior of the province of Kwang-tung, took a last look back at the Great North Gate of Canton, whence exit had been granted him by the sullen French guard who were constituted a standing garrison and nuisance at that portal. Of the eight gates of the city—which was then occupied by a force of some three thousand British troops, associated with a couple of hundred French marines—seven were garrisoned by detachments from the British regiments, and were kept constantly open for the convenience of the native inhabitants; but on the part of our gallant allies there existed an evident resolve to compensate the smallness of their force by a considerable amount of pretension and display; and the French "corps of occupation" cleverly made its otherwise insignificant presence known by closing, double-locking, and refusing to open, under any persuasion other than that of a military pass, the solitary gate which it was their privilege to garrison. My passage was not, however, to be disputed by even the sulkiest of sentries, and I was soon traversing with my party the peaceful expanse of country which, skirted on the right hand by the low line of hills known as the White Cloud range, extends in an otherwise unbroken flat of unctuous rice-lands for a distance of thirty or forty miles from the walls of Canton. My mission now led me to traverse this plain, and to enter the mountain region which forms its northern boundary, constituting the last declivities of the great eastern spurs of the Himalayan range.

A week's ride during the hottest month in China, when the thermometer even at midnight is seldom seen as low as eighty degrees, and when its noonday range is frequently above rather than below the dreadful degree of ninety-five, is not an expedition to be undertaken on choice; but no matter what may be the discomforts from weather, a feeling of exhilaration is sure to accompany the first outset for a journey on horseback—a feeling which the prosaic modern conveniences for locomotion have now utterly extinguished in all civilized lands. The romance of travel has decidedly fled to those ever-fewer regions where pathless solitudes still exist for Spekes and Burkes to break upon, or where

men remain content with the sluggish track-boat or the plodding feet of some hardy quadruped. To these unsophisticated forms of travel I had long been accustomed; and my hardy mountain pony—the only animal capable of making its way over the rough bridle-paths and narrow granite causeways of Southern China—had carried me many a hundred miles, through storm and shine, in the region surrounding Canton.

I was now making my first stage by night, in order to lessen, as far as possible, the discomfort arising from the sultry weather. For security's sake, I was attended by a mounted escort from the garrison; and, at the last moment, a welcome companion, in the shape of Captain M—, of the Royal Engineers, had volunteered to share my otherwise somewhat lonely ride. To our mounted party, clattering over the granite flagstones which pave the narrow North Road for some miles from the city gate, came following, in a light mountain-chair of bamboo, carried by three coolies, a mandarin, appointed by the Chinese authorities at Canton to accompany and co-operate with me. It was not the first time we had journeyed together, and our acquaintanceship had already subsisted for years. Unlike the majority of his countrymen, Tse Tung-hao, as he was named, was a man of liberal as well as intelligent mind; and an amount of frankness and honesty was noticeable in him which won the regard of all the Europeans with whom he was brought in contact to a degree that perhaps no other Chinese official has enjoyed.

Our party was completed by two servants, one a follower of the mandarin, the other my own—the faithful A-sing—my *major-domo*, valet, and, on occasions such as these, my cook:—equally excellent in all the varied capacities in which he shone, but especially to be prized whilst roughing it on the march; when, throwing off the dandyism and finicalities which are inseparable, at ordinary times, from the demeanour of a Chinese "boy," he displayed an energy, activity, and willingness, which could only be paralleled by some of those rough Irish "soldier-servants" who are now and then found—and prized—in the army. Of all servants, however, few can be brought in comparison with a really good and well-trained Canton "boy." These neat and orderly lads of eighteen or twenty, trim in dress, respectful in manner, without a tinge of servility, and frequently possessing an education of their own by no means to be despised, constitute the first indispensable adjunct to be

acquired by a stranger on his arrival in China; and the "boy," often engaged at random, remains frequently for a score of years in the service of the same employer. Infinitely superior, in activity as in appearance, is the sprightly Canton lad, in his white surplice-like jacket, blue knickerbockers, and dandily-gartered stockings of stone gray calico, to the slouching, greasy, ill-savoured Hindoo, who, as *khitmulgur*, condescends at Calcutta to discharge about one-tenth part of the duties which are cheerfully assumed by his Chinese congener!

But this, though a favourite topic of mine, must not be allowed to divert us from our proper line of march. The servants, and a long train of baggage-coolies—those veritable impediments to every journey such as this—have been sent on to reach our halting-place before us, and we pursue our march under the shadow of the White Cloud Mountain, along a road rendered lonely through the depredations of the rebels who devastated this province in 1854. Here and there, to right or left, a large village may be recognized by its glimmering lights and the long-continued yelping of its watch-dogs; but Chinese villages are not fond of highroads passing through their midst, and prefer to draw themselves apart some little distance from the public thoroughfare, so that at night-fall they may bolt and bar their streets, and take what poor precautions they can against the banded robbers who permanently infest most parts of the country. Although, therefore, our course lies through a succession of highly-cultivated lands—the alluvial level dense with the flourishing rice-plant, and the rising grounds carefully turned to account with ground-nut, sweet-potato, and vegetable crops—scarcely a human habitation shows itself, beyond here and there a bamboo tea-shed, whence refreshment of a very humble kind is dispensed at all hours to the travellers who pass along this road. At one point, where a granite bridge spans a stream that issues, brawling, from the gloomy side of the adjoining range, a ghastly memorial of the recent troubles hangs alone in the moonlight. A pole erected at the foot of the bridge supports a cage, fastened in which is a human head, once, as declared by an inscription beneath it, that of a native of the adjoining village, recently captured among the rebel ranks. Here for months the warning trophy had hung exposed, and no pitying relative had come forward, bold enough to snatch this relic of his village

kinsman from its place of infamy, and to give it decent burial.

Trotting gaily enough over the bridge, we continued our course through the nightly shadows of the hills, which, projected by the moon rising behind them to the eastward, fell in great fantastic promontories and gloomy stretches of thick darkness on the silent country. For miles at a time we yielded to the influence of the hour, and pursued our course without a sound from either party. Then, again, the charm broken by some sudden observation, a further distance was whiled away in lively chat. Occasionally, as my pony ambled along beside the chair in which my mandarin friend was stoutly borne by his untiring coolies, our conversation fell into his favourite grooves—the wonders of Europe, the dangers of the seas, and his own misfortunes in failing to obtain more rapid advancement. The comet, then so brightly visible, was a source of apprehension to Tse, and upon it also he loved to discourse. Intelligent as he was, he fully shared the superstitions of his countrymen regarding the influence of such an apparition on human affairs; and, though he no longer considered the earth as a flat surface, or believed that the sun revolved around the globe, he still looked with dread upon this portent, which presaged to his mind disasters to the empire, if not death to the emperor. On becoming aware, however, that the comet was equally visible in England and other countries as in China, and receiving such a sketch of the history and theory of comets as my knowledge enabled me to impart,—(and, be it said *en passant*, there are easier performances than the rendering of an astronomical lecture into colloquial Chinese)—he acknowledged that there seemed small grounds for prognosticating special harm to any particular land or person. This did not, however, prevent him from recalling to my mind, little more than a month later, when the death of the reigning emperor actually took place, that the ominous "thief-star" had shone so recently in the heavens. The appearance of the comet and the ensuing death of Hien-fung were great feathers for the Zadkiel-cap of superstition all over China.

At length, towards 11 P.M., our weary ride of eighteen miles brought us to our halting-place for the night, at the village of Tien-sum, a large and straggling place, containing a population which would entitle it to rank as a town anywhere else than in China, almost entirely surrounded by a dense grove of huge banyan-trees, and

further defended, as usual, by a wide belt of fish-ponds, forming a moat across which a few narrow causeways alone gave access to the place. Clattering through the tortuous and murky village street, we were by no means sorry to reach the spot where the great gates of the Temple of the Chang family were thrown open to receive us. Under the directions of the indefatigable A-sing, the court-yard was already littered with rice-straw for our ponies, and two huge red temple candles, flaring in the dim depths of the great hall, shed light on an extemporized table where teacups and cold fowl showed that preparations had been made for supper. The baggage-coolies, some dozen in number, were lying pillowed on the bamboos and ropes with which their loads were in the daytime suspended from their shoulders, in the shelter of the colonnades on either side the doorway, and the remainder of our party, men and horses, were soon refreshing themselves with food and rest in their several ways.

It is lucky for the traveller that every village in China, however poor or scanty its population, possesses at least one, and often many, of these ancestral temples, in which each of the local "clans" or families preserves from generation to generation the memory of its revered progenitors. All, though not equally spacious, are constructed on an identical plan. An immense gateway, with three folding doors, sometimes twenty or even thirty feet in height, gives admission to a court-yard, and perhaps to a series of three or four such enclosures, which are generally open to the sky, surrounded on three sides with a covered colonnade, and terminating at the rear in a hall, the dimensions of which, in the case of wealthy clans, often extend to a width of from fifty to one hundred feet. Shrines are here built up against the wall, to contain in horizontal rows a series of tablets commemorating the departed members of the family, from the earliest progenitor of whom a record exists. Ornamental inscriptions further perpetuate the memory of all who have distinguished themselves in the profession of letters or the service of the State, and a richly decorated altar supports the vases of bronze or porcelain in which the ashes of the incense kept constantly burning before the tablets are carefully preserved in heaps from generation to generation. Twice in the year, the heads of the clan and other privileged members assemble with solemn ceremony and deep reverential feeling to do homage before the shrines where soon their own memorial tablets are to be erected, and fulfil the du-

ties of filial piety in silent genuflection before the altar of the dead. At all seasons, moreover, the temple is kept in order, and the sticks of incense trimmed, by a custodian for whose residence a side-building is usually set apart; and an annual contribution from every member maintains the building in constant repair. The most humble labourer who can claim kindred with the family can thus at any moment gaze with pride upon the hallowed name of every ancestor who has helped to illustrate his clan, and has always the means at hand of pointing to an indisputable pedigree which may connect him with the noblest in the land. Thus, in the temple which now gave us lodging for the night, tablets were to be seen commemorating a minister of State whose name was celebrated in China before William the Conqueror sat on the English throne, whilst the gilding was scarcely dry on the tablet of his latest follower to the tomb—some humble villager whose only title to remembrance was his name and clanship. There is surely no more touching form that filial reverence could take, than this perennial homage, altogether unassociated with idol-worship or hagiolatry, to the deceased; and it has conducted in no small degree to the success of the Roman Catholic propaganda, as compared with the relative failure of Protestant missionary efforts, that its priesthood has adopted, under certain restrictions, this form of ancestral commemoration, whilst the orthodox zeal of Protestant missionaries has insisted on its abandonment as one of the first steps toward conversion.

It may, perhaps, be thought that some violence could not fail being done to the feelings of those concerned in temples of this class, by using them as lodging for man and beast; but the callousness of the Chinese character shows itself nowhere more forcibly than in this point, that nothing short of wanton disrespect, even in the temples of their divinities, seems to jar with their reverential feelings. Their temples are habitually open for the accommodation of travellers, and it has more than once happened to myself that, when a party has been too numerous for the sleeping-room disposable in the temple occupied for the night, some jolly priest has voluntarily removed the incense-burners from the altar, and helped to dispose a camp-mattress at the very feet of the gilded gods themselves.

If no prejudices were likely to be offended, however, as regards the occupation of quarters in a temple, it was only within a very short period that national animosity

was so fierce that no European's life would have been safe in the village where our party was now so civilly received. Inflamed by the arts of their rulers, the population of this province had, up to the year 1859, evinced the deadliest hatred towards foreigners, and the very building where we were now confidently betaking ourselves to rest, had, in 1858, been the seat of one of the committees of the native "gentry,"* formed for the express object of waging a war of assassination against the invaders who had taken possession of Canton. The vigorous measures directed by Mr. (now Sir Harry) Parkes, by which this organization became speedily broken up, combined with the conciliatory effect produced by the treatment extended to the authorities and inhabitants of Canton, had so far affected the popular temper as to disarm all active feeling of hostility even previously to the conclusion of peace in the North of China in 1860; and a mere solitary traveller would now have been safe, if prudent, unless at too great a distance from the walls of Canton, or in districts frequented by the robber-bands who infest so many parts of China.

Our slumbers passed undisturbed until the mental alarm which I had fixed the night previously for 5 A.M. awoke me just as the earliest rays of the sun were glittering on the enamelled porcelain figures which quaintly decorated the roof-tree on the opposite side of the court-yard. In a few moments all was astir. Our coolies had already found time to prepare a cup of tea, and to snatch a few whiffs from their consoling pipes; and soon, cording up our baggage, and slinging the parcels from the centre of their stout bamboos, they trotted off nimbly in pairs, exchanging jokes with the few labourers, bound thus early to the fields, who hung about the door to witness our departure. A cup of cocoa all round, prepared by the invaluable A-sing, a cigar apiece, and we, too, resume our march. The wrinkled old custodian of the temple grins feebly as he pockets a dollar for his services, and hobbles back to his morning pipe of opium, probably with a *tempora mutant* in Chinese upon his lips. The village children, rewarded for early rising, scramble on the flagstones for a handful of "cash" (total value about three-halfpence) which we throw amongst them; and we emerge from the straggling village into the

oblique sun-glare, which proves trying enough, despite our precautions in the way of dress.

Convinced that the morning and evening sun is the most dangerous in the open field, inasmuch as its slanting rays can be warded off neither by head-covering nor umbrella, I had resolved on the experiment of travelling chiefly during the middle of the day and by night; but it was necessary to accomplish one stage thus early in order to bring us to our second halting-place by evening. Some ten miles farther on lay a pleasant little hamlet, whither the baggage had been dispatched in charge of the accomplished A-sing, who was to prepare breakfast for the party; but our ride thither proved sultry enough — by the narrow pathway or dyke between the rice-fields, a mere mudbank scarcely two feet in breadth, along which we ambled perspiringly; our troubles increased by the radiation from the water which at that season still lay flooding the green rice-fields on either hand.

We could not, however, deny the striking beauty of the scene. Traversing a plain, one sheet of emerald verdure, our course ran parallel to the low chain of hills constituting the White Cloud range, whose flanks, half-shrouded in the mist distilled from the abundant irrigation, lay glowing in the softest violet tints, whilst, at frequent intervals, the green expanse was broken by cloudy masses of foliage, denoting the sites of populous though obscure villages. Occasionally, when the road skirted some of these more closely, young and old might be seen crowding forth to crane at a glimpse of the passing strangers, the like of whom many, perhaps, had never looked on before. Whether it were that feminine curiosity mastered the usual feeling of alarm and doubt, or that a natural instinct told them they were safe, it almost universally happened that the village damsels and matrons ventured on a nearer approach than their husbands and brothers cared to indulge in. Seldom, however, does an attractive force display itself among these audacious fair ones. The squalid life of the Chinese peasantry — who, though sometimes amassing money, are content with the filthiest of habitations and of dress, and seldom seem to rise to an appreciation of that comparative comfort, cleanliness, and varied diet which even the lower classes of the town population indulge in — has its natural result in a grossness of feature and a deepening of the natural swarthy colour, until the Mongolian countenance, sometimes so delicate and fair, degenerates into the abject brutality of the Malay.

* Literati of a certain class and retired functionaries in general form — especially in the south of China — a privileged body to whom this term is applied, and who enjoy great local power.

Nothing, indeed, could be more unfavourable to the development of good looks than a Chinese village habitation. With the exception of one, or perhaps two streets, some ten or twelve feet in breadth, where the few wretched shops that supply the wants of the place are situated, the houses, built of mud concrete, on a foundation of brick, are huddled together in fetid lanes, the utmost width of which is calculated to suit the passage of the water-buffaloes, as they are driven, morning and evening, to and from their owners' homes. No house possesses an upper story, or is lighted with any contrivance approaching to a window. A low doorway, the only aperture in the four walls of the house, gives entrance to a narrow, uncleanly court-yard, which again communicates with the dark and damp apartment, with possibly two or three still dingier and less ventilated side-rooms, forming the sole abode for a family of several generations. A fire-place in the porch serves to cook the rice and prepare the tea, which, with salt-fish and vegetables, constitute the universal diet; whilst what we denominate the "sweepings" are carelessly thrown out to join, in the black ooze of the lane, whatever other ordure may be there collected; its impurities draining through the soil to mingle with the water of the well sunk in a corner of the court-yard. Left entirely to self-government, which is conducted by a council of the oldest and least active members of the little community, the village is totally destitute of any system of drainage, and altogether innocent of even the most rural of police. Its inhabitants are never brought in contact with the central governing authority, save when twice a year the messengers of the district magistrate appear to claim the imperfect land-tax and their own private extortions, or when on rare occasions some great crime traced home to some present or late inhabitant brings down the dreaded functionary himself, with a swarm of retainers and "braves" eager to embrace the opportunity for plunder afforded by the official perquisition.

Many such communities were skirted and left behind before we reached, by eight o'clock, our morning halt. A-sing, the ever-ready, had selected for our breakfast a grove of magnificent lychee-trees gay with their pink bunches of cherry-like fruit, close to a small hamlet whose entire population stood grouped around his preparations for our repast. The "chow-chow" basket, which formed a load for one of our coolie-pairs, had poured forth its motley load of

provisions; and cold fowl, potted meats, sardines, and biscuits, accompanied by sundry bottles of Allsopp's pale ale, were now prepared to quench our active appetites. We were too good travellers, however, to provide ourselves before seeing our ponies well groomed and settled down to plenteous baskets of paddy from the village rice-shop; nor did we appease our hunger until after much splashing and sponging in the shade of the lychee-trees, to the undisguised astonishment of the villagers, who saw us thus dangerously dabbling in cold water. At length we fell to, and performed feats of gastronomy which were also followed with wondering eyes, whilst our escort gladly received from our store some savoury additions to their own supply of cooked rations. The rustling branches of the lychee grove soon covered with their shade the outstretched bodies of our entire party; the light-blue smoke of our Manilas joining in a little cloud of incense to which the opium-pipe of my mandarin associate was not slow in adding its nauseous flavour.

All too soon for our wishes, the lychee shadows began to gather more and more closely about the roots of the trees, and just as the blazing sun looked hottest the time for moving arrived. Our baggage-coolies, resuming their wide bamboo-hats, and sticking their pipes into the waistbands of the loose cotton drawers which formed their sole habiliments, had already set off, at their usual slinging trot, accompanied by the mandarin and servants in their sedans, before we roused ourselves to "boot and saddle" from our delicious drowsy lounge on the cool grass-plot. By noon, however, we were already emerging from the village, and exposed to the now vertical glare; but shaded as we were by white umbrellas and thick turbans wound round our felt helmets, the rays of heat were warded off to a degree impossible in the earlier stage of our march, and though suffering unavoidably from the heated state of the atmosphere, we experienced no ill effects from the actual glare itself.

A few miles on our course happily brought us to a point where the White Cloud range is joined at right angles by a mountain chain from the westward, and through a defile at the point of junction lay the route we must take to reach our destination—the city of Tsung-hwa. On entering this defile we instantly exchanged the scenery of the unctuous and village-dotted plain for that of a picturesque valley, flanked on either hand by endless mountain perspectives, and traversed by a stream which, for varied beauty,

might vie with many of our most famous English waters. A fresh breeze, borne straight from the flanks of the Lo Fow Mountains, whose lofty peaks, celebrated in Chinese song and story, were dimly seen on our right hand, tempered the atmosphere to a pleasant warmth; and dismounting, followed by our obedient ponies, we enjoyed a careless saunter through the beauties of the secluded valley and its placid stream. My Engineer companion had come prepared to add every possible scrap to our records of the topography of the province, and having on previous occasions already carried a rough survey as far as the entrance of the pass, a prismatic compass now enabled us to plot down with tolerable accuracy the leading features of this tract. The question of nomenclature was settled by a whimsical reference to our never-failing cheroots; and to this day the curious inquirer may see Mount Cavendish, Negro-head Peak, and the Birdseye Range, with many another tobacco-flavoured appellation, on the road-map of our line of march.

Following at a little distance the curves of the river, our route grew more and more picturesque with our onward progress. Almost all trace of rice-cultivation was here at an end, and in its stead the straggling patches of arable land forming little bays and gullies in the line of hill were covered with the papilionaceous blossom of the ground-nut, cultivated for its yield of oil, or with the gigantic leaves of the yam, which, though affecting a marshy situation, is less dependent upon rich soil and constant flooding than the rice-plant. The villages appeared composed more of detached habitations, a few dwellings clustered here and there beneath graceful clumps of the feathery bamboo, or running down to form a sinuous street of shops along the river bank, dealing in sundry eatables, spirits, fuel, and cordage, for the benefit of the boatmen engaged in navigating the stream. Occasionally the inhabitants of some such rustic community would cluster in a gaping crowd along our path, equally puzzled as to the motive which led us to their secluded dale, our eccentric choice of trudging afoot when ponies were following behind, and the use of the unknown instrument of brass, which every now and then, they saw twinkling in front of my companion's eye. Now and then the rough Canton boatmen of some passing barge ascending the stream with merchandise, or dropping down with firewood or oil, would descry us on the bank, and launch at us the not over-complimentary ejaculations which the Canton Chinese

have even yet not entirely unlearned; but no incivility met us from the inhabitants of the valley, whose experience of Europeans, limited to the sight of two or three mounted parties like our own, had not accustomed them to associate with the foreigners any feeling either of arrogance or terror.

Towards 4 P. M., our light-hearted party debouched upon an extensive plain, shut in, however, on every side, by mountain ranges, which, enveloped in the thin mist arising from the rice-flats, were now gorgeously tinted by the slanting radiance of the declining sun. Two streams, meandering from east and west, united almost at our feet to form the river whose course we had thus far ascended; whilst, hid from our view by a bold rock-shoulder on the further side of the stream, lay the city of Tsung-hwa, a little metropolis domineering in the centre of this rich and tranquil expanse. Just below the junction of the streams, the river widened over sand-flats to a breadth probably of five hundred yards, forming a shallow ford.

Having safely waded through, and leaving our ponies in charge of the escort, my companion and myself clambered up the rock about which our route now wound, and whose summit was crowned by a graceful pagoda, affording a view on all sides of immense extent and beauty. The valley we had ascended, and the hill-encircled area, now carpeted green with the luxuriant rice-fields through a length of some twenty miles, forming the district of Tsung-hwa, lay smiling at our feet in the warm sunshine, which lit up into dazzling ribands of silver the two streams whose serpentine wanderings through the valley brought every part of its area within reach of irrigation. Thickly-studded groves marked the sites where villages lay hid, whilst immediately below us we looked down upon the moss-grown walls and roof-tops, interspersed with dense foliage, of the district city. This little nook, one of some eighty walled places in Kwangtung, answering in a certain degree to our idea of a county town, had seven years previously been captured and sacked by the banditti who then desolated the province, and even from a distance the ruinous aspect of its little suburb testified to the devastation it had then undergone. Even the pagoda — which, according to the Chinese superstition as to terrestrial and topographical influences, or *Fung-shuei*, contributed from its eminence on the rock to the prosperity and literary excellence of the inhabitants of the city — had been gutted by the plunderers, whose ravages had scarcely left it in a condition for ascent beyond the first of its nine

stories. After adding from this point a final series of mountain tops to our running survey, we proceeded to make our entry into the town.

Already warned of our approach, the magistrate had attempted some display in our honour at the gateway. Passing beneath a low but massive archway, we found ourselves in a narrow court-yard, formed by a circular bastion interrupting the line of wall, from the inner side of which a second gateway, placed at right angles to the outer one, communicated with the main street of the city. Here, half-a-dozen decrepit old men, who had been employed until our arrival at a cobbler's bench at one side of the court-yard, but who had hastily thrown over

their rags their dirty red soldiers' jackets of calico, were drawn up, headed by a brass-buttoned petty officer scarcely less ragged than the men themselves, and greeted us by a simultaneous obeisance, performed by bending forward on one knee; whilst three iron tubes, placed upright in the ground and loaded with powder, were discharged as the orthodox salute in honour of a "mandarin." The narrow, granite-paved street — scarcely ten feet wide, and lined with ruinous houses of the poorest class, save where great gaps of ruin caused by fire or natural decay from a dwindling population intervened — was lined with a multitude of young and old, attracted from all corners to gaze upon the strangers who had come from so far.

APRIL.

BY JOHN G. WHITTIER.

"The Spring comes slowly up this way."
Christabel.

'Tis the noon of the Spring-time, yet never a bird

In the wind-shaken elm or the maple is heard;
For green meadow-grasses wide levels of snow,
And blowing of drifts where the crocus should blow;

Where wind-flower and violet, amber and white,
On south-sloping brook-sides should smile in the light;

O'er the cold winter-beds of their late-waking roots,

The frosty flake eddies, the ice-crystal shoots;
And, longing for light, under wind-driven heaps,
Round the bolls of the pine-wood the ground-laurel creeps,

Unkissed of the sunshine, unbaptized of showers,

With buds scarcely swelled, which should burst into flowers!

We wait for thy coming, sweet wind of the south!

For the touch of thy light wings, the kiss of thy mouth;

For the yearly evangel thou bearest from God,
Resurrection and life to the graves of the sod!
Up our long river-valley, for days have not ceased

The wail and the shriek of the bitter north-east,—

Raw and chill, as if winnowed through ices and snow,

All the way from the land of the wild Esquimaux,—

Until all our dreams of the land of the blest,
Like that red hunter's, turn to the sunny south-west.

O, soul of the Spring-time, its light and its breath,
Bring warmth to this coldness, bring life to this death;

Renew the great miracle; let us behold
The stone from the mouth of the sepulchre rolled,

And Nature, like Lazarus, rise, as of old!
Let our faith, which in darkness and coldness has lain,

Revive with the warmth and the brightness again,

And in blooming of flower and budding of tree
The symbols and type of our destiny see;

The life of the Spring-time, the life of the whole,

And as sun to the sleeping earth, love to the soul.

WHEN IN OUR NURSERY GARDEN.

When in our nursery garden falls a blossom,
And as we kiss the hand and fold the feet,
We cannot see the lamb in Abraham's bosom,
Nor hear the footfall in the golden street.

When all is silent, neither moan nor cheering,
The hush of hope, the end of all our cares—
All but that harp above, beyond our hearing,
Then most we need to trouble Him with prayers.

Then most we need the thoughts of Resurrection,

Not the life here, 'mid pain, and sin and woe,
But ever in the fulness of perfection

To walk with Him in robes as white as snow.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE POST BAG.

"Thofts, ilke ivy on a ruin, make the rifts they seem to shade."—C. G. DUFFY.

"August 3, 7 A. M.

"MY DEAR COLONEL KEITH,—Papa is come, and I have got up so early in the morning that I have nothing to do but to write to you before we go in to Avonchester. Papa and Mr. Beauchamp came by the six o'clock train, and Lady Temple sent me in the waggonette to meet them. Aunt Ailie would not go, because she was afraid Aunt Ermine would get anxious whilst she was waiting. I saw papa directly, and yet I did not think it could be papa, because you were not there, and he looked quite past me, and I do not think he would have found me or the carriage at all if Mr. Beauchamp had not known me. And then, I am afraid, I was very naughty, but I could not help crying just a little when I found you had not come; but perhaps Lady Keith may be better, and you may come before I go into court to-day, and then I shall tear up this letter. I am afraid papa thought I was unkind to cry when he was just come home, for he did not talk to me near so much as Mr. Beauchamp did, and his eyes kept looking out as if he did not see anything near, only quite far away. And I suppose Russian coats must be made of some sort of sheep that eats tobacco."

"August 3, 10 A. M.

"DEAREST COLIN,—I have just lighted on poor little Rosie's before-breakfast composition, and I can't refrain from sending you her first impressions, poor child, though no doubt they will alter, as she sees more of her father. All are gone to Avonchester now, though with some doubts whether this be indeed the critical day; I hope it may be, the sooner this is over the better; but I am full of hope. I cannot believe but that the Providence that has done so much to discover Edward's innocence to the world, will finish the work! I have little expectation though of your coming down in time to see it; the copy of the telegraphic message, which you sent by Harry, looks as bad as possible, and even allowing something for inexperience and fright, things must be in a state in which you could hardly leave your brother, so unwell as he seems.

2 P.M. I was interrupted by Lady Temple, who was soon followed by Mrs. Curtis, burning to know whether I had any more intelligence than had floated to

them. Pray, if you can say anything to exonerate poor Rachel from mismanagement, say it strongly; her best friends are so engaged in wishing themselves there, and pitying poor Bessie for being in her charge, that I long to confute them, for I fully believe in her sense and spirit in any real emergency that she had not ridden out to encounter.

"And I have written so far without a word on the great subject of all, the joy untold that our hearts had ached for so long, and that we owe entirely to you; for Edward owns that nothing but your personal representations would have brought him, and, as I suppose you already know—he so much hated the whole subject of Maddox's treachery that he had flung aside, unread, all that he saw related to it. Dear Colin, whatever else you have done, you have filled a famished heart. Could you but have seen Ailie's face all last evening as she sat by his side, you would have felt your reward—it was as if the worn, anxious, almost stern mask had been taken away, and our Ailie's face was beaming out as it used when she was the family pet, before Julia took her away to be finished. She sees no change; she is in an ecstasy of glamour that makes her constantly repeat her rejoicings that Edward is so much himself, so unchanged, till I almost feel unsisterly for seeing in him the traces that these sad years have left, and that poor little Rose herself has detected. No, he is not so much changed as exaggerated. The living to himself, and with so cruel a past, has greatly increased the old dreaminess that we always tried to combat, and he seems less able than before to turn his mind into any channel but the one immediately before him. He is most loving when roused, but infinitely more inclined to fall off into a muse. I am afraid you must have had a troublesome charge in him, judging by the uproar Harry makes about the difficulty of getting him safe from Paddington. It is good to see him and Harry together—the old schoolboy ways are so renewed, all bitterness so entirely forgotten, only Harry rages a little that he is not more wrapped up in Rose. To say the truth, so do I; but if it were not for Harry's feeling the same, I should believe that you had taught me to be exacting about my rosebud. Partly, it is that he is disappointed that she is not like her mother; he had made up his mind to another Lucy, and her Williams face took him by surprise, and, partly, he is not a man to adapt himself to a child. She must be trained to help unobtrusively

in his occupations; the unknowing little plaything her mother was, she never can be. I am afraid he will never adapt himself to English life again—his soul seems to be in his mines, and if as you say he is happy and valued there—though it is folly to look forward to the wrench again, instead of rejoicing in the present gladness; but often as I had fashioned that arrival in my fancy, it was never that Harry's voice, not yours, should say the 'Here he is.'

"They all went this morning in the wagonette, and the two boys with Miss Curtis in the carriage. Lady Temple is very kind in coming in and out to enliven me. I am afraid I must close, and send this before their return. What a day it is! And how are you passing it? I fear, even at the best, in much anxiety. Lady Temple asks to put in a line. Yours ever,

"E. W."

"August 3d, 5 P. M."

"MY DEAR COLONEL,—This is just to tell you that dear Ermine is very well, and bearing the excitement and suspense wonderfully. We were all dreadfully shocked to hear about poor dear Bessie; it is so sad her having no mother nor any one but Rachel to take care of her, though Rachel would do her best, I know. If she would like to have me, or if you think I could do any good, pray telegraph for me the instant you get this letter. I would have come this morning, only I thought, perhaps, she had her aunt. That stupid telegraph never said whether her baby was alive, or what it was; I do hope it is all right. I should like to send nurse up at once—I always thought she saved little Cyril when he was so ill. Pray send for nurse or me, or anything I can send: anyway, I know nobody can be such a comfort as you; but the only thing there is to wish about you is, that you could be in two places at once.

"The two boys are gone in to the trial, they were very eager about it; and dear Grace promises to take care of Conrade's throat. Poor boys! they had got up a triumphal arch for your return; but I am afraid I am telling secrets. Dear Ermine is so good and resolutely composed—quite an example. Yours affectionately,

"F. G. TEMPLE."

"AVONCESTER, August 3d, 2 P. M."

"MY DEAR COLONEL KEITH,—I am just come out of court, and I am to wait at the inn, for Aunt Allie does not like for me to hear the trial, but she says I may write to you to pass away the time. I am sorry

I left my letter out to go this morning, for Aunt Allie says it is very undutiful to say anything about the sheep's wool in Russia smelling of tobacco. Conrade says it is all smoking, and that every one does it who has seen the world. Papa never stops smoking but when he is with Aunt Ermine; he sat on the box and did it all the way to Avonchester, and Mr. Beauchamp said it was to compose his mind. After we got to Avonchester we had a long, long time to wait, and first one was called and then another, and they wanted me last of all. I was not nearly so frightened as I was that time when you sent for me, though there were so many more people; but it was daylight, and the judge looked so kind, and the lawyer spoke so gently to me, and Mr. Maddox did not look horrid like that first time. I think he must be sorry now he has seen how much he has hurt papa. The lawyer asked me all about the noises, and the lions, and the letters of light, just as Mr. Grey did; and they showed me papa's old seal ring, and asked if I knew it, and a seal that was made with the new one that he got when the other was lost; and I knew them because I used to make impressions on my arms with them when I was a little girl. There was another lawyer that asked how old I was, and why I had not told before; and I thought he was going to laugh at me for a silly little girl, but the judge would not let him, and said I was a clear-headed little maiden; and Mr. Beauchamp came with Aunt Allie, and took me out of court, and told me to choose anything in the whole world he should give me, so I chose the little writing case I am writing with now, and 'The Heroes' besides, so I shall be able to read till the others come back, and we go home.—Your affectionate little friend,

"ROSE ERMINE WILLIAMS."

"THE HOMESTEAD, August 3, 9 P. M."

"MY DEAR ALEXANDER,—You made me promise to send you the full account of this day's proceedings, or I do not think I should attempt it, when you may be so sadly engaged. Indeed, I should hardly have gone to Avonchester had the sad intelligence reached me before I had set out, when I thought my sudden return would be a greater alarm to my mother, and I knew dear Fanny would do all she could for her. Still she has had a very nervous day, thinking constantly of your dear sister, and of Rachel's alarm and inexperience; but her unlimited confidence in your care of Rachel is some comfort, and I am hoping that the

alarm may have subsided, and you may be all rejoicing. I have always thought that, with dear Rachel, some new event or sensation would best efface the terrible memories of last spring. My mother is now taking her evening nap, and I am using the time for telling you of the day's doings. I took with me Fanny's two eldest, who were very good and manageable; and we met Mr. Grey, who put us in very good places, and told us the case was just coming on. 'You will see the report in detail in the paper, so I will only try to give what you would not find there. I should tell you that Maddox has entirely dropped his *alias*. Mr. Grey is convinced that was only a bold stroke to gain time and prevent the committal, so as to be able to escape, and that he 'reckoned upon bullying a dense old country magistrate;' but that he knew it was quite untenable before a body of unexceptionable witnesses. Altogether the man looked greatly altered and crest-fallen, and there was a meanness and vulgarity in his appearance that made me wonder at our ever having credited his account of himself. He had an abject look, very unlike his confident manner at the sessions, nor did he attempt his own defence. Mr. Grey kept on saying he must know that he had not a leg to stand upon.

"The counsel for the prosecution told the whole story, and it was very touching. I had never known the whole before; the sisters are so resolute and uncomplaining: but how they must have suffered when every one thought them ruined by their brother's fraud. I grieve to think how we neglected them, and only noticed them when it suited our convenience. Then he called Mr. Beauchamp, and you will understand better than I can all about the concern in which they were embarked, and Maddox coming to him for an advance of £300, giving him a note from Mr. Williams, asking for it to carry out an invention. The order for the sum was put into Maddox's hands, and the banker proved the paying it to him by an order on a German bank.

"Then came Mr. Williams. I had seen him for a moment in setting out, and was struck with his strange, lost, dreamy look. There is something very haggard and mournful in his countenance; and, though he has naturally the same fine features as his eldest sister, his cheeks are hollow, his eyes almost glassy, and his beard, which is longer than the colonel's, very gray. He gave me the notion of the wreck of a man, stunned and crushed, and never thoroughly alive again; but when he stood in the wit-

ness-box, face to face with the traitor, he was very different; he lifted up his head, his eyes brightened, his voice became clear, and his language terse and concentrated, so that I could believe in his having been the very able man he was described to be. I am sure Maddox must have quailed under his glance, there was something so loftily innocent in it, yet so wistful, as much as to say, 'how could you abuse my perfect confidence?' Mr. Williams denied having received the money, written the letter, or even thought of making the request. They showed him the impression of two seals. He said one was made with a seal-ring given him by Colonel Keith, and lost some time before he went abroad; the other, with one with which he had replaced it, and which he produced, he had always worn it on his finger. They matched exactly with the impressions; and there was a little difference in the hair of the head upon the seal that was evident to every one. It amused the boys extremely to see some of the old jurymen peering at them with their glasses. He was asked where he was on the 7th of September (the date of the letters), and he referred to some notes of his own, which enabled him to state that on the 5th he had come back to Prague from a village with a horrible Bohemian name—all es and zs—which I will not attempt to write, though much depended on the number of the said letters.

"The rest of the examination must have been very distressing, for Maddox's council pushed hard about his reasons for not returning to defend himself, and he was obliged to tell how ill his wife was, and how terrified; and they endeavoured to make that into an admission that he thought himself liable. They tried him with bits of the handwriting, and he could not always tell which were his own;—but I think every one must have been struck with his honorable scrupulosity in explaining every doubt he had.

"Other people were called in about the writing, but Alison Williams was the clearest of all. She was never puzzled by any scrap they showed her, and, moreover, she told of Maddox having sent for her brother's address, and her having copied it from a letter of Mrs. Williams's, which she produced, with the wrong spelling, just as it was in the forgery. The next day had come a letter from the brother, which she showed, saying that they were going to leave the place sooner than they had intended, and spelling it right. She gave the same account of the seals, and nothing ever seemed

to disconcert her. My boys were so much excited about their own 'Miss Williams,' that I was quite afraid they would explode into a cheer.

"That poor woman whom we used to call Mrs. Rawlins told her sad story next. She is much worn and subdued, and Mr. Grey was struck with the change from the fierce excitement she showed when she was first confronted with Maddox after her own trial, but she held fast to the same evidence, giving it not resentfully, but sadly and firmly, as if she felt it to be her duty. She, as you know, explained how Maddox had obtained access to Mr. Williams's private papers, and how she had afterwards found in his possession the seal ring, and the scraps of paper in his patron's writing. A policeman produced them, and the seal perfectly filled the wax upon the forged letter. The bits of paper showed that Maddox had been practising imitating Mr. Williams's writing. It all seemed most distinct, but still there was some sharp cross-examination of her on her own part in the matter, and Mr. Grey said it was well that little Rose could so exactly confirm the facts she mentioned.

"Poor, dear little Rose looked very sweet and innocent, and not so much frightened as at her first examination. She told her story of the savage way in which she had been frightened into silence. Half the people in the court were crying, and I am sure it was a mercy that she was not driven out of her senses, or even murdered that night. It seems that she was sent to bed early, but the wretches knowing that she always woke and talked to her mother at her bed time, the phosphoric letters were prepared to frighten her, and detain her in her room, and then Maddox growled at her when she tried to pass the door. She was asked how she knew the growl to be Maddox's, and she answered that she heard him cough. Rachel will, I am sure, remember the sound of that little dry cough. Nothing could make it clearer than that the woman had spoken the truth. The child identified the two seals with great readiness, and then was sent back to the inn that she might not be perplexed with hearing the defence. This, of course, was very trying to us all, since the best the counsel could do for his client was to try to pick holes in the evidence, and make the most of the general acquiescence in Mr. Williams's guilt for all these years. He brought forward letters that showed that Mr. Williams had been very sanguine about the project, and had written about the possibility that an advance might be needed. Some of the letters, that both Mr. Williams and Alison

owned to be his writing, spoke in most flourishing terms of his plans; and it was proved by documents and witnesses that the affairs were in such a state that bankruptcy was inevitable, so that there was every motive for securing a sum to live upon. It was very miserable all the time this was going on; the whole interpretation of Mr. Williams's conduct seemed to be so cruelly twisted aside, and it was what every one had all along believed, his absence was made so much of, and all these little circumstances that had seemed so important were held so cheap—one knew it was only the counsel's representation, and yet Alison grew whiter and whiter under it. I wish you could have heard the reply: drawing the picture of the student's absorption and generous confidence, and his agent's treachery, creeping into his household, and brutally playing on the terrors of his child.

"Well, I cannot tell you all, but the judge summed up strongly for a conviction, though he said a good deal about culpable negligence almost inviting fraud, and I fear it must be very distressing to the Williamses; but the end was that Maddox was found guilty, and sentenced to fourteen years' penal servitude, though I am afraid they will not follow Conrade's suggestion, and chain up a lion by his bed every night of his life.

"We were very happy when we met at the inn, and all shook hands. Dr. Long was, I think, the best at ease. He had come in case this indictment had in any way failed, to bring his own matter forward, so that Maddox should not get off. I do not like him very much, he seemed unable to be really hearty, and I think he must have once been harsh and now ashamed of it. Then he was displeased at Colonel Keith's absence, and could hardly conceal how much he was put out by the cause, as if he thought the Colonel had imposed himself on the family as next heir. I hardly know how to send all this in the present state of things, but I believe you will wish to have it, and will judge how much Rachel will bear to hear. Good night.

Your affectionate Sister,

"GRACE CURTIS."

"GOWANBRAE, AVONMOUTH, }
August 3d, 11 P.M. }

"DEAR KEITH,—Before this day has ended you must have a few lines from the man whom your exertions have relieved from a stigma, the full misery of which I only know by the comfort of its removal. I told you there was much that could never be restored. I feel this all the more in the

presence of all that now remains to me, but I did not know how much could still be given back. The oppression of the load of suspicion under which I labored now seems to me to have been intolerable since I have been freed from it. I cannot describe how changed a man I have felt, since Beauchamp shook hands with me. The full blackness of Maddox's treachery I had not known, far less his cruelty to my child. Had I been aware of all I could not have refrained from trying to bring him to justice; but there is no need to enter into the past. It is enough that I owe to you a freed spirit, and new life, and that my gratitude is not lessened by the knowledge that something besides friendship urged you. Ermine is indeed as attractive as ever, and has improved in health far more than I durst expect. I suppose it is your all-powerful influence. You are first with all here, as you well deserve; even my child, who is as lovely and intelligent as you told me, has every thought pervaded with 'the colonel.' She is a sweet creature; but there was one who will never be retraced, and forgive me, Keith, without her, even triumph must be bitterness. Still ever most gratefully yours,

"EDWARD WILLIAMS."

"August 3d, 11 P.M.

"DEAREST COLIN, — The one sound in my ears, the one song of my heart is, 'Let them give thanks.' It is as if we had passed from a dungeon into sunshine. I suppose it would be too much if you were here to share it. They sent Rose in first to tell me, but I knew in the sound of their wheels that all was well. What an evening we have had; but I must not write more. Ailie is watching me like a dragon, and will not rest till I am in bed; but I can't tell how to lose one minute of gladness in sleep. Oh, Colin, Colin, truest of all true knights, what an achievement yours has been!"

"August 4th.

"That was a crazy bit that I wrote last night, but I will not make away with it. I don't care how crazy you think me. It would have been a pity not to have slept to wake to the knowledge that it was not a dream, but then came the contrast with the sorrow you are watching. And I have just had your letter. What a sudden close to that joyous life! She was one of the sweetest creatures, as you truly say, that ever flashed across one's course; and if she had faults, they were those of her day and her training. I suppose by what you say that she was too girlish to be all the companion your brother required, and that this may ac-

count for his being more shocked than sorrow-stricken; and his child, since he can dwell on the thought, is such a new beginning of hope, that I wonder less than you do at his bearing up so well. Besides, pain dulls the feelings, and is a great occupation. I wish you could have seen that dear Bessie, but I gather that the end came on much more rapidly than had been expected. It seemed as if she were one of those to whom even suffering was strangely lightened and shortened, as if she had met only the flowers of life, and even the thorns and stings were almost lost in their bright blossoms. And she could hardly have lived on without much either of temptation or sorrow. I am glad of your testimony to Rachel's effectiveness, I wrote it out and sent it up to the Homestead. There was a note this morning requesting Edward to come in to see Maddox, and Ailie is gone with him, thinking she may get leave to see poor Maria. Think of writing Edward and Ailie again! Dr. Long and Harry are gone with them. The broken thread is better pieced by Harry than by the Doctor; but he wants Ailie and me to go and stay at Belfast. Now I must hear Rose read, in order to bring both her and myself to our reasonable senses."

"5 P.M.

"They have been returned about an hour, and I must try to give you Edward's account of his interview. Maddox has quite dropped his mask, and seems to have been really touched by being brought into contact with Edward again, and, now it is all up with him, seemed to take a kind of pleasure in explaining the whole web, almost, Edward said, with vanity at his own ingenuity. It was as he used to represent himself to Edward. He was a respectable ironmonger's son, with a taste for art; he was not allowed to indulge it, and then came rebellion, and breaking away from home. He studied at the Academy for a few years, but wanted application, and fancied he had begun too late, tried many things and spent a shift life, but never was consciously dishonest till after he had fallen in with Edward; and the large sums left uninquied for in his hands became a temptation to one already inclined to gambling. His own difficulties drove him on, and before he ventured on the grand stroke, he had been in a course of using the sums in his hands for his own purposes. The finding poor Maria open to the admiration he gave her beauty, put it into his head to make a tool of her; and this was not the first time he had used Edward's seal, or imitated his writing. No wonder there was

such a confusion in the accounts as told so much against Edward. He told the particulars, Edward says, with the strangest mixture of remorse and exultation. At last, came the journey to Bohemia, and his frauds became the more easy, until he saw there must be a bankruptcy, and made the last bold stroke, investing the money abroad in his own name, so that he would have been ready to escape if Edward had come home again. He never expected but that Edward would have returned, and finding the affairs hopeless, did this deed in order to have a resource. As to regret, he seemed to feel some when he said the effects had gone farther than he anticipated; but 'I could not let him get into that subject,' Edward said, and he soon came back to his amused complacency in his complete hoodwinking of all concerned at home, almost thanking Edward for the facilities his absence had given him. After this, he went abroad, taking Maria, lest she should betray him on being cast off; and they lived in such style at German gambling places that destitution brought them back again to England, where he could better play the lecturer, and the artist in search of subscriptions. Edward could not help smiling over some of his good stories, rather as 'the lord may have commended the wisdom of his unjust steward.' Well, here he came, and, as he said, he really could hardly have helped himself; he had only to stand still and let poor Rachel deceive herself, and the whole concern was in a manner thrust upon him. He was always expecting to be able to get the main sum into his hands, as he obtained more confidence from Rachel, and the woodcuts were an over-bold stroke for the purpose; he had not intended her to keep or show them, but her ready credulity tempted him too far; and I cannot help laughing now at poor Edward's reproofs to us for having been all so easily cheated, now that he has been admitted behind the scenes. Maddox never suspected our neighborhood; he had imagined us still in London, and though he heard Alison's name, he did not connect it with us. After all, what you thought would have been fatal to your hopes of tracing him, was really what gave him into our hands—Lady Temple's sudden descent upon their F. U. E. E. If he had not been so hurried and distressed as to be forced to leave Maria and the poor child to their fate, Maria would have held by him to the last, and without her testimony where should we have been! But with a summons out against him, and hearing that Maria had been recognized, he could only fly to the place at Bristol that he

thought unknown to Maria. Even when seized by the police, he did not know it was she who directed them, and had not expected her evidence till he actually saw and heard her on the night of the sessions. It was all Colonel Keith's doing, he said; every other adversary he would have despised, but your array of forces met him at every corner where he hoped to escape, and the dear little Rosie gave him checkmate, like a gallant little knight's pawn as she is. 'Who could have guessed that child would have such a confounded memory?' he said, for Edward had listened with a sort of interest that had made him quite forget that he was Rose's father, and that this wicked cunning Colonel was working in his cause. So off he goes to penal servitude, and Edward is so impressed and touched with his sharpness as to predict that he will be the model prisoner before long, if he do not make his escape. As to poor Maria, that was a much more sad meeting, though perhaps less really melancholy, for there can be no doubt that she repents entirely; she speaks of every one as being very good to her, and indeed the old influences only needed revival, they had never quite died out. Even that poor child's name was given for love of Ailie, and the perception of having been used to bring about her master's ruin had always preyed upon her, and further embittered the temper. The barbarity seemed like a dream in connection with her, but, as she told Ailie, when she once began something came over her, and she could not help striking harder. It reminded me of horrible stories of the Hathertons' usage of animals. Enough of this. I believe the sisterhood will find a safe shelter for her when her imprisonment is over, and that temptation will not again be put in her way. We should never have trusted her in poor dear Lucy's household. Rose calls for the letters. Good bye, dearest Colin and conqueror. I know all this will cheer you, for it is your own doing. I can't stop saying so, it is such a pleasant sound. Your own,

"E. W. —."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

VANITY OF VANITIES.

"A life of self-renouncing love
Is a life of liberty."

A. L. WARING.

THE funeral was very quiet. By Colonel Keith's considerate arrangement the attendants met at Timber End, so that the stillness of the Parsonage was not invaded; a measure the more expedient as Alick was

suffering from a return of his old enemy, intermitting fever, and only was able to leave his room in time to join the procession.

Many were present, for poor Bessie had been a general favourite, and her untimely fate had stirred up feelings that had created her into a saint upon earth; but there was no one whose token of respect she would have more esteemed than Colonel Hammond's, who in all the bustle of the remove to Edinburgh had found time to come to Bishopsworthy to do honour to the daughter of his old commanding officer. A flush of gratitude came over Alick's pale face when he became aware of his colonel's presence, and when the choristers' hymn had pealed low and sweetly over the tranquil meadows, and the mourners had turned away, Alick paused at the Parsonage gate to hold out his hand, and bring in this one guest to hear how near to Bessie's heart the father's Highland regiment had been in all the wanderings of her last moments.

The visit was prolonged for nearly an hour, while recollections of Alick's parents were talked over, and Rachel thought him more cheered and gratified than by any other tribute that had been paid to his sister. He was promised an extension of leave; if it were required on account of Lord Keith's state, though under protest that he would have the aguish fever as long as he remained overlooking the water meadows, and did not put himself under Dr. M'Vicar. Through these meadows Colonel Hammond meant to walk back to the station, and Alick and Rachel conducted him far enough to put him into the right path, and in going back again, they could not but go towards the stile leading to that corner of the churchyard where the sexton had finished his work, and smoothed the sods over that new grave.

Some one was standing at the foot—but the sexton—but a young man bending as with an intolerable load of grief. Rachel saw him first, when Alick was helping her down the step, and her start of dismay made him turn and look round. His brow contracted, and she clutched his arm with an involuntary cry of, "Oh, don't," but he, with a gesture that at once awed and tranquillized her, unclasped her hold and put her back, while he stepped forward.

She could hear every word, though his voice was low and deep with emotion. "Carleton, if I have ever been harsh or unjust in my dealings towards you, I am sorry for it. We have both had the sad-

dest of all lessons. May we both take it as we ought."

He wrung the surprised and unwilling hand, and before the youth, startled and overcome, had recovered enough to attempt a reply, he had come back to Rachel, resumed her arm, and crossed the churchyard, still shivering and trembling with the agitation and the force he had put on himself. Rachel neither could nor durst speak; she only squeezed his hand, and when he had shut himself up in his own room, she could not help repairing to his uncle, and telling him the whole. Mr. Clare's "God bless you, my boy," had double meaning in it that night.

Not long after, Alick told Rachel of his having met poor young Carleton in the meadows, pretending to occupy himself with his fishing-rod, but too wretched to do anything. And in a short time Mrs. Carleton again called to pour out to Mrs. Keith her warm thanks to the Captain for having roused her son from his moody, unmanageable despair, and made him consent to accept a situation in a new field of labour, in a spirit of manful duty that he had never evinced before.

This was a grave and subdued, but not wholly mournful period, at Bishopsworthy—a time very precious to Rachel in the retrospect—though there was much to render it anxious. Alick continued to suffer from recurrences of the fever, not very severe in themselves after the first two or three, but laying him prostrate with shivering and headache every third day, and telling heavily on his strength and looks when he called himself well. On these good days he was always at Timber End, where his services were much needed. Lord Keith liked and esteemed him as a sensible, prudent young man, and his qualities as a first-rate nurse were of great assistance to the Colonel. Lord Keith's illness was tedious and painful; the necessity of a dangerous operation became increasingly manifest, but the progress towards such a crisis was slow and the pain and discomfort great; the patient never moved beyond his dressing-room, and needed incessant attention to support his spirits and assist his endeavours to occupy himself. It was impossible to leave him for long together, and Colonel Keith was never set at liberty for exercise or rest except when Alick came to his assistance, and fortunately this young brother-in-law was an especial favourite, partly from Lord Keith's esteem for his prudence, partly from his experience in this especial species of suffer-

ing. At any rate the days of Alick's enforced absence were always times of greater restlessness and uneasiness at Timber End.

Meantime Rachel was constantly thrown with Mr. Clare, supplying Alick's place to him, and living in a round of duties that suited her well, details of parish work, walking with, writing for, and reading to Mr. Clare, and reaping much benefit from intercourse with such a mind. Many of her errors had chiefly arisen from the want of some one whose superiority she could feel, and her old presumptions withered up to nothing when she measured her own powers with those of a highly educated man, while all the time he gave her thanks and credit for all she had effected, but such as taught her humility by very force of infection.

Working in earnest at his visitation sermon, she was drawn up into the real principles and bearings of the controversy, and Mr. Clare failed not to give full time and patience to pick out all her difficulties, removing scruples at troubling him, by declaring that it was good for his own purpose to unwind every tangle even if he did not use every thread. It was wonderful how many of her puzzles were absolutely intangible, not even tangled threads, but a sort of nebulous matter that dispersed itself on investigation. And after all, unwilling as she would have been to own it, a woman's tone of thought is commonly moulded by the masculine intellect, which under one form or another, becomes the master of her soul. Those opinions, once made her own, may be acted and improved upon, often carried to lengths never thought of by their inspirer, or held with noble constancy and perseverance even when he himself may have fallen from them, but from some living medium they are almost always adopted, and thus, happily for herself, a woman's efforts at scepticism are but blind faith in her chosen leader, or, at the utmost, in the spirit of the age. And Rachel having been more than usually removed from the immediate influence of superior men, had been affected by the more feeble and distant power, a leading that appeared to her the light of her independent mind; but it was not in the nature of things that, from her husband and his uncle, her character should not receive that tincture for which it had so long waited, strong and thorough in proportion to its nature, not rapid in receiving impressions, but steadfast and uncompromising in retaining and working on them when once accepted—a

nature that Alick Keith had discerned and valued amid its worst errors far more than mere attractiveness, of which his sister had perhaps made him weary and distrustful. Nor, indeed, under the force of the present influences, was attractiveness wanting, and she suited Alick's peculiarities far better than many a more charming person would have done, and his uncle, knowing her only by her clear mellow voice, her consideration, helpfulness, and desire to think and do rightly, never understood the doubtful amazement now and then expressed in talking of Alick's choice. One great bond between Rachel and Mr. Clare was affection for the little babe, who continued to be Rachel's special charge, and was a great deal dearer to her already than all the seven Temples put together. She studied all the books on infant management that she could obtain, constantly listened for his voice, and filled her letters to her mother with questions and details on his health, and descriptions of his small person. Alick was amused whenever he glanced at his strong-minded woman's correspondence, and now and then used to divert himself with rousing her into emphatic declarations of her preference of this delicate little being to "great, stout, coarse creatures that people call fine children." In fact, Alick's sensitive tenderness towards his sister's motherless child took the form of avoiding the sight of it, and being ironical when it was discussed; but with Mr. Clare, Rachel was sure of sympathy, ever since the afternoon when he had said how the sounds upstairs reminded him of his own little daughter; and sitting under the yew tree, he had told Rachel all the long stored-up memories of the little life that had been closed a few days after he had first heard himself called papa by the baby lips. He had described all these events calmly, and not without smiles, and had said how his own blindness had made him feel thankful that he had safely laid his little Una on her mother's bosom under the church's shade; but when Rachel spoke of this conversation to her husband, she learnt that it was the first time that he had ever talked of those buried hopes. He had often spoken of his wife, but though always fond of children, few who had not read little Una's name beneath her mother's cross, knew that he was a childless father. And yet it was beautiful to see the pleasure he took in the touch of Bessie's infant, and how skillfully and tenderly he would hold it, so that Rachel in full faith averred that the little Alexander was never so happy as with him. The

chief alarms came from Mrs. Comyn Menteith, who used to descend on the Rectory like a whirlwind, when the Colonel had politely expelled her from her father's room at Timber End. Possessed with the idea of Rachel's being very dull at Bishopsworthy, she sedulously enlivened her with melancholy prognostics as to the life, limbs, and senses of the young heir, who would never live, poor little darling, even with the utmost care of herself and her nurse, and it was very perverse of papa and the doctors still to keep him from her — poor little darling — not that it mattered, for he was certain not to thrive, wherever he was, and the Gowanbrae family would end with uncle Colin and the glass-blower's daughter; a disaster on which she met with such condolence from Alick (N. B. the next heir) that Rachel was once reduced to the depths of genuine despair by the conviction that his opinion of his nephew's life was equally desponding; and another time was very angry with him for not defending Ermine's gentility. She had not entirely learnt what Alick's assent might mean.

Once, when Mrs Menteith had been besetting her father with entreaties for the keys of Lady Keith's private possessions, she was decisively silenced, and the next day, these same keys were given to Alick, with a request that his wife would as soon as possible look over and take to herself all that had belonged to his sister, except a few heirloom jewels that must return to Scotland. Alick demurred greatly, but the old man would not brook contradiction, and Rachel was very unwillingly despatched upon the mission on one of Alick's days of prostration at home. His absence was the most consoling part of this sad day's work. Any way it could not be otherwise than piteous to dismantle what had been lately so bright and luxurious, and the contrast of the present state of things with that in which these dainty new wedding presents had been brought together, could not but give many a pang; but beside this, there was a more than ordinary impression of "vanity of vanities, all is vanity," very painful to affection that was striving to lose the conviction that it had been a self-indulgent, plausible life. The accumulation of expensive trinkets and small luxuries was as surprising as perplexing to a person of Rachel's severely simple and practical tastes. It was not only since the marriage; for Bessie had always had at her disposal means rather ample, and had used them not exactly foolishly, but evidently for her own gratification. Everything had some intrinsic worth, and was tasteful

or useful, but the multitude was perfectly amazing, and the constant echo in Rachel's ears was, "he heapeth up riches and cannot tell who shall gather them." Lord Keith could hardly have found an executrix for his poor young wife, to whom her properties would have done so little harm. Rachel set many aside for the cousins, and for Mrs. Menteith; others she tried to persuade the Colonel to call Gowanbrae belongings, and failing in this, she hoped through Grace, to smuggle some of them into his Gowanbrae; but when all was done, there was a mass of things that Lord Keith never wished to see again, and that seemed to Rachel to consist of more ornaments than she could ever wear, and more knick-knacks than a captain's wife could ever carry about with her.

She was putting aside the various packets of letters and papers to be looked over more at leisure, when the Colonel knocked at the morning-room door, and told her that his brother would like to see her; when her work was done. "But first," he said, "I must ask you to be kind enough to look over some of these papers, and try to find receipts for some of these bills."

"Here they are," said Rachel; "I was going to look them over at home."

"If you have time to examine them here with me," said Colonel Keith, gently, "I think it may save Alick some pain and vexation."

Rachel was entirely unaware of his meaning, and supposed he only thought of the mere thrilling of the recent wound, but when he sat down and took a long account out of a tradesman's envelope, a chill of dismay came over her, followed by a glow of hope as she recollected a possible explanation: "Have these wretched tradesmen been sending in bills over again at such a time as this?" she exclaimed.

"I should be very glad to find their receipts," returned the Colonel.

They opened the most business-like looking bundles, all of them, though neatly kept, really in hopeless confusion. In vain was the search, and notes came forth which rendered it but too plain that there had been a considerable amount of debt even before the marriage, and that she had made partial payments and promises of clearing all off gradually, but that her new expenses were still growing upon her, and the few payments "on account," since she had been Lady Keith, by no means tallied with the amount of new purchases and orders. No one had suspected her money matters of being in disorder, and Rachel was very slow to comprehend; her simple, country life had

made her utterly unaware of the difficulties and ways and means of a young lady of fashion. Even the direct evidence before her eyes would not at first persuade her that it was not "all those wicked tradesmen;" she had always heard that fashionable shops were not to be trusted.

"I am afraid," said Colonel Keith, "that the whole can scarcely be shifted on the tradesmen. I fear poor Bessie was scarcely free from blame in this matter."

"Not paying! Going on in debt! Oh she could not have meant it!" said Rachel, still too much astonished to understand. "Of course one hears of gay, thoughtless people doing such things, but Bessie—who had so much thought and sense. It must be a mistake! Can't you go and speak to the people?"

"It is very sad and painful to make such discoveries," said Colonel Keith; "but I am afraid such things are not uncommon in the set she was too much thrown amongst."

"But she knew so well—she was so superior; and with Alick and her uncle to keep her above them," said Rachel; "I cannot think she could have done such things."

"I could not think, but I see it was so," said Colonel Keith, gravely. "As I am obliged to understand these things, she must have greatly exceeded her means, and have used much cleverness and ingenuity in keeping the tradesmen quiet, and preventing all from coming to light."

"How miserable! I can't fancy living in such a predicament."

"I am much afraid," added the Colonel, looking over the papers, "that it explains the marriage—and then Keith did not allow her as much as she expected."

"Oh Colonel Keith, don't!" cried Rachel; "it is just the one thing where I could not bear to believe Alick. She was so dear and beautiful, and spoke so rightly."

"To believe Alick!" repeated the Colonel, as Rachel's voice broke down.

"I thought—I ought not to have thought—he was hard upon her,—but he knew better," said Rachel; "of course he did not know of all this dreadful business!"

"Assuredly not," said the Colonel, "that is self-evident; but as you say, I am afraid he did know his poor sister's character better than we did, when he came to warn me against the marriage."

"Did he! Oh how much it must have cost him."

"I am afraid I did not make it cost him less. I thought he judged her harshly, and that his illness had made him magnify trifles, but though our interference would have

been perfectly useless, he was quite right in his warning. Now that, poor thing, she is no longer here to enchant us with her witcheries, I see that my brother greatly suffered from being kept away from home, and detained in this place, and that she left him far more alone than she ought to have done."

"Yes, Alick thought so, but she had such good reasons; I am sure she believed them herself."

"If she had not believed them, she could not have had such perfect sincerity of manner," said the Colonel; "she must have persuaded at least one half of herself that she was acting for every one's good but her own."

"And Mr. Clare, whom Alick always thought she neglected, never felt it. Alick says he was too unselfish to claim attention."

"I never doubted her for one moment till I came home, on that unhappy day, and found how ill Keith was. I did think then that considering how much she had seen of Alick while the splinters were working out, she ought to have known better than to talk of sciatica; but she made me quite believe in her extreme anxiety, and that she was only going out because it was necessary for her to take care of you on your first appearance. How bright she looked, and how little I thought I should never see her again!"

"Oh, she meant what she said! She always was kind to me! Most kind!" repeated Rachel; "so considerate about all the dreadful spring—not one word did she say to vex me about the past! I am sure she did go out on that day as much to shelter me as for anything else. I can't bear to think all this—here in this pretty room that she had such pleasure in; where she made me so welcome, after all my disagreeableness and foolishness."

The Colonel could almost have said, "Better such foolishness than such wisdom, such repulsion than such attraction." He was much struck by Rachel's distress, and the absence of all female spite and triumph made him understand Ermine's defence of her as really large-minded and generous.

"It is a very sad moment to be undeceived," he said; "one would rather have one's faults come to light in one's life than afterwards."

They were simple words, so simple that the terrible truth with which they were connected, did not come upon Rachel at the first moment, but as if to veil her agitation, she drew towards her a book, an ivory-bound Prayer-book, full of illuminations, of

Bessie's own doing, and her eye fell upon the awful verse, "So long as thou doest well unto thyself, men will speak good of thee." It was almost more than Rachel could bear, sitting in the midst of the hoards, for which poor Bessie had sold herself. She rose up, with a sob of oppressive grief, and broke out, "Oh! at least it is a comfort that Alick was really the kindest and rightest! Only too right! But you can settle all this without him," she added imploringly; "need he know of this? I can't bear that he should."

"Nor I," said Colonel Keith, "it was the reason that I am glad you are here alone."

"Oh, thank you! No one need ever know," added Rachel.

"I fear my brother must see the accounts, as they have to be paid, but that need not be immediately."

"Is there anything else that is dreadful?" said Rachel, looking at the remaining papers, as if they were a nest of adders. "I don't like to take them home now, if they will grieve Alick."

"You need not be afraid of that packet," said the Colonel; "I see his father's handwriting. They look like his letters from India."

Rachel looked into one or two, and her face lighted up. "Oh!" she exclaimed, "this is enough to make up for all. This is his letter to tell about Alick's wound. Oh how beautifully he speaks of him," and Rachel, with no voice to read, handed the thin paper to her companion, that he might see the full commendation, that had been wrung from the reserved father's heart by his son's extremity.

"You must be prepared to hear that all is over," wrote the father to his daughter; "in fact, I doubt whether he can live till morning, though M'Vicar declares that nothing vital has been touched. Be it as it may, the boy has been in all respects even more than I dared to wish, and the comfort he has been ever since he came out to me has been unspeakable. We must not grudge him such a soldier's death after his joyous life. But for you, my poor girl, I could only wish the same for myself to-morrow. You will, at least, if you lose a brother's care, have a memory of him, to which to live up. The thought of such a dead brother will be more to you than many a living one can ever be to a sister."

Rachel's heart beat high, and her eyes were full of tears of exultation. And the Colonel was well pleased to compensate for all the pain he had inflicted by giving her all the details he could recollect of her husband's short campaign. They had be-

come excellent friends over their mournful work, and were sorry to have their *tête-à-tête* interrupted when a message was brought that his Lordship was ready, if Mrs. Keith would be so good as to come into his sitting-room.

She wiped away the tears, and, awe-struck and grave, followed the Colonel; a great contrast to Lord Keith's more frequent lady visitor, as she silently received the polished greeting, its peculiar stateliness of courtesy, enhanced by the feeble state of the shattered old man, unable to rise from his pillowed chair, and his face deeply lined by suffering. He would not let her give him any account of her labours, nor refer any question to him; he only entreated that everything might be taken away, and that he might hear nothing about it. He spoke warmly of Alick's kindness and attention, and showed much solicitude about his indisposition, and at last he inquired for Rachel's "little charge," hoping he was not clamorous or obnoxious to her, or to Mr. Clare's household. Her eager description of his charms provoked a look of interest and a sad smile, followed by a request that, weather and doctor permitting, she would bring the child to be seen for a few minutes. The next day there was an appointment, at which both the Colonel and Alick were wanted, but on the following one, the carriage should be sent to bring her and the little one to Timber End.

The effect of this invitation amused Alick. The first thing he heard in the morning was a decided announcement from Rachel that she must go up to London to procure equipments for the baby to be presented in!

"You know I can't go with you to-day."

"Of course, but I must make him fit to be seen. You know he has been wearing little Una's things all this time, and that will not do out of the nursery."

"A superior woman ought to know that his Lordship will never find out what his son has on."

"Then it is all the more reason that I should not let the poor dear little fellow go about wrapped up in somebody's old shawl!"

"What will you do then—take your maid?"

"Certainly not. I can't have him left."

"Then take him with you?"

"What, Alick, a little unvaccinated baby! Where have you ever lived? I don't see the least reason why I should not go alone."

"You need not begin beating about the world yet, Rachel. How many times did you say you had been in London?"

"Three; once with my father when I was a child, once in the time of the Great Exhibition, and passing through it now with you. But any one of common sense can manage."

"If you will wait till five o'clock I will come with you," said Alick, wearily.

"No, indeed, I had rather not go, than that you should; you are quite tired out enough at the end of the day."

"Then do not go."

"Alick, why will you have no proper feeling for that poor dear child?" said Rachel, with tears in her eyes.

If he winced he did not show it. "My proper feeling takes the direction of my wife," he said.

"You don't really mean to forbid me to go," she exclaimed.

"I don't mean it, for I do so, unless you find some one to go with you."

It was the first real collision that had taken place, but Alick's quiet, almost languid tone had an absolute determination in it from the very absence of argument; and Rachel, though extremely annoyed, felt the uselessness of battling the point. She paused for a few moments, then said with an effort, "May I take the housekeeper?"

"Yes, certainly," and then he added some advice about taking a brougham, and thus lighted her heart; so that she presently said humbly,—

"Have I been self-willed and over bearing, Alick?"

He laughed. "Not at all; you have persevered just where you ought. I dare say this is all more essential than shows on the surface. And," he added, with a shaken voice, "if you were not myself, Rachel, you know how I should thank you for caring for my poor Bessie's child." He was gone almost as he spoke the words, but Rachel still felt the kiss and the hot tears that had fallen on her face.

Mr. Clare readily consented to spare his housekeeper, but the housekeeper was untoward, she was "busied in her housewife skep," and would not stir. Alick was gone to Timber End, and Rachel was just talking of getting the schoolmaster's wife as an escort, when Mr. Clare said,—

"Pray are you above accepting my services?"

"You! Oh, Uncle; thank you, but" —

"What were your orders? Anybody with you, was it not? I flatter myself that I have some *body*, at least."

"If Alick will not think I ought not!"

"The boy will not presume to object to what I do with you."

"I do wish it very much," said candid Rachel.

"Of course you do, my dear. Alick is not cured of a young man's notion that babies are a sort of puppies. He is quite right not to let you run about London by yourself, but he will be quite satisfied if you find eyes and I find discretion."

"But is it not very troublesome to you?"

"It is a capital lark!" said Mr. Clare, with a zest that only the slang word could imply, removing all Rachel's scruples; and in effect Mr. Clare did enjoy the spice of adventure in a most amusing way. He knew perfectly well how to manage, laid out the plan of operations, gave orders to the driver, went into all the shops, and was an effective assistant in the choice of material and even of embroidery. His touch and ear seemed to do more for him than many men's eyes do for them; he heard odd scraps of conversation and retailed them with so much character; he had such pleasant colloquies with all in whose way he fell, and so thoroughly enjoyed the flow and babble of the full spring of life, that Rachel marvelled that the seclusion of his parsonage was bearable to him. He took her to lunch with an old friend, a lady who had devoted herself to the care of poor girls to be trained as servants, and Rachel had the first real sight of one of the many great and good works set on foot by personal and direct labour.

"If I had been sensible, I might have come to something like this!" she said.

"Do you wish to undo these last three months?"

"No; I am not fit to be anything but an ordinary married woman, with an Alick to take care of me; but I am glad some people can be what I meant to be."

"And you need not regret not being useful now," said Mr. Clare. "Where should any of us be without you?"

It had not occurred to Rachel, but she was certainly of far more positive use in the world at the present moment than ever she had been in her most assuming maiden days.

Little Alexander was arrayed in all that could enhance his baby dignity, and Rachel was more than ever resolved to assert his superiority over "great frightful fine children," resenting still more vehemently an innocent observation from Alick, that the small features and white skin promised sandiness of hair. Perhaps Alick delighted in saying such things for the sake of proving the very womanhood of his clever woman.

Rachel hung back, afraid of the presentation, and would have sent her maid into the room with the child if Colonel Keith had not taken her in himself. Even yet she was not dexterous in handling the baby; her hands were both occupied, and her attention absorbed, and she could not speak, she felt it so mournful to show this frail motherless creature to a father far more like its grandfather, and already almost on the verge of the grave. She came up to Lord Keith, and held the child to him in silence. He said, "Thank you," and kissed not only the little one, but her own brow, and she kept the tears back with difficulty.

Colonel Keith gave her a chair and foot stool, and she sat with the baby on her lap, while very few words were spoken. It was the Colonel who asked her to take off the hood that hid the head and brow, and who chiefly hazarded opinions as to likeness and colour of eyes. Lord Keith looked earnestly and sadly, but hardly made any observation, except that it looked healthier than he had been led to expect. He was sure it owed much to Mrs. Keith's great care and kindness.

Rachel feared he would not be able to part with his little son, and began to mention the arrangements she had contemplated in case he wished to keep the child at Timber End. On this, Lord Keith

asked with some anxiety, if its presence were inconvenient to Mr. Clare; and being assured of the contrary, said, "Then while you are so kind as to watch over him, I much prefer that things should remain in their present state, than to bring him to a house like this. You do not object?"

"Oh, no; I am so glad. I was only dreading the losing him. I thought Mrs. Menteith wished for him when he is old enough to travel."

"Colin!" said Lord Keith, looking up sharply, "will nothing make the Menteiths understand that I would rather put out the child to nurse in a Highland hut than in that Babel of a nursery of theirs?"

Colin smiled and said, "Isabel does not easily accept an answer she dislikes."

"But remember, both of you," continued Lord Keith, "that happen what may, this poor child is not to be in her charge. I've seen enough of her children left alone in perambulators in the sun. You will be in Edinburgh?" he added, turning to Rachel.

"Yes, when Alick's leave ends."

"I shall return thither when this matter is over; I know I shall be better at home in Scotland, and if I winter in Edinburgh, may be we could make some arrangement for his being still under your eye."

Rachel went home more elevated than she had been for months past.

DEATH OF MR. SCHOOLCRAFT.— Henry Rowe Schoolcraft died at Washington on Saturday last, in his seventy-first year. He was a native of Albany County and a graduate of Middlebury College; and as his father superintended a glass-house in Massachusetts, he studied the art of glass-making, and in 1816 published the first part of a work on "Vitreology." His next work was "A view of the Lead Mines in Missouri," which was followed by a narrative of travel in the Ozark Mountains. In 1820 he explored the copper regions of Lake Superior, and published an account of the expedition. In 1821 Mr. Schoolcraft was appointed a secretary to an Indian Commission at Chicago, and the result was a book of "Travels in the Central Portions of the Mississippi Valley."

In 1822 fairly commenced those relations of Mr. Schoolcraft which turned his attention to the affairs of our North American Indians, and induced him to strike out into a new literary path. He was appointed Indian agent on the north-western frontier. He married a lady, Miss Johnston, who, though the granddaughter of an

Indian chief, had been educated in Europe. He took up his abode at Sault St. Marie, and in 1828 was a member of the legislature of Michigan territory. He wrote about Indian history and poetry, and delivered lectures thereon. In 1832 he led the expedition which discovered the source of the Mississippi, for many years subsequently devoting his attention to Indian affairs.

In 1847 he began, under government patronage, his great work entitled "Historical and Statistical Information respecting the History, Condition and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States." Of late years he had resided at Washington.

Mr. Schoolcraft, besides being an active explorer and a diligent antiquary, had devoted considerable attention to the more poetical aspects of aboriginal life. His "Indian Legends" are charmingly written, and have furnished Longfellow with the themes of several of his admired poems. By the death of Mr. Schoolcraft American literature has lost a shining light.—*N. Y. Evening Post*, Dec. 14.

From the Saturday Review.

ARMENIAN POPULAR SONGS.*

NOT the least interesting of the sights of Venice is the Convent of the Armenian Monks, on the island of San Lazzaro. It stands alone, a little removed from the city, and as the visitor approaches it in his gondola, its low dark-red buildings seem to rise abruptly from the lagoon before him. To the left shines the white dome of the Redentore, and the massive church and convent of San Giorgio Maggiore stand close by. Beyond the island stretches the sandy flat of the Lido, fringed with shrubs and bushes, over which may be seen from the convent roof the calm breath of the Adriatic, and the long hazy line of the Lombard shore, scantily dotted with trees, and broken here and there by a village campanile. Southward, the eye lingers along the blue serrated outline of the Euganean hills, and, looking back, it sees the Ducal Palace and the Piazzetta, overtopped by the gleaming dome of St. Mark's.

On this island, in the early part of the last century, a little colony of fugitives from Turkish oppression found a resting-place and made themselves a home. Their leader, Mechitar, here closed in peace a restless and adventurous life. A native of Armenia, born in 1676, he spent his early years at home, devoting himself energetically to study. But, after he had been ordained priest, he entered upon a most active career, commencing a struggle that did not terminate till many years had passed away. The Armenians were, and for the most part still remain, members of the Greek Communion, but Mechitar was soon led to reconcile himself with the Western Church, and, urged by an earnest desire to visit Rome, he set sail for Europe. But his hopes were frustrated. Stress of weather first stopped him on the way, and then a violent fever compelled him to relinquish his project. Obligated to return to the East, he set up a small establishment at Pera, where he gathered a few disciples around him. As their numbers increased, their home became too small for them, and they removed to the Morea, where the little congregation hoped to find a quiet abode, and where they commenced the task of publishing a series of Armenian works. But their peace was soon disturbed. A war broke out between Venice and the Porte, which ended in the complete subjugation of the Morea to Turkish rule. Mechitar and his

brethren had considerable difficulty in effecting their escape, but, after many adventures and much suffering, they arrived at Venice. There they hoped to find a refuge, but an unexpected obstacle presented itself. By a law of the Senate, no new Society was allowed to establish itself within the city, and the fugitives were beginning to despair, when it was suggested that the outlying island of San Lazzaro might be given up to them. Accordingly, the offer was made and gladly accepted. This took place in the year 1717, and Mechitar lived to see his work prospering, and his congregation firmly established. He died in the year 1749, and since that time the institution has flourished under a series of abbots, and its members are still busily employed in the publication of Armenian records and the promulgation of Armenian literature.

During his stay in Venice, Byron was a frequent visitor at the convent, and he seemed to enjoy the change from the wild excitement of his life in the city to the peace and contentment he found within those walls. "By way of divertissement," he says in one of his letters, "I am studying daily, at an Armenian monastery, the Armenian language. I found that my mind wanted something craggy to break upon; and this, as the most difficult thing I could discover here for an amusement, I have chosen to torture me into attention." He goes on to say that four years previously the French instituted an Armenian Professorship at Paris; that twenty pupils appeared on the Monday, full of enthusiasm, but that on the Thursday fifteen out of the twenty succumbed in despair before the twenty-sixth letter of the alphabet. At all events Byron did not follow their example. He pursued his studies with zeal and perseverance, and left behind him a record of his industry in a translation of two apocryphal Epistles of St. Paul to the Corinthians. He also assisted his tutor, Dr. Pascal Aucher, in the compilation of a grammar, and wrote a preface to it, which was suppressed by the authorities on account of its savage abuse of the Turks.

The number of books printed every year at San Lazzaro is very great. An extensive series of classical Armenian authors has been for some time in progress, and many of the most popular European works have been translated and published for the use of Armenians. But, of all the publications which has issued from the Mechitarist press, the most interesting to an English reader is the collection of Armenian Popular Poetry which is now before us. It contains a num-

* *Armenian Popular Songs*. Translated into English by the Rev. Leo M. Alishan, D.D., of the Mechitarist Society. Venice.

ber of songs and ballads, composed at various periods between the thirteenth and the eighteenth century, taken from manuscripts in the library of San Lazzaro, the original text being accompanied by a literal English version. The editor, Father Alishan, who deserves great credit for the accuracy and spirit of his translation, dedicates it to the people of England, and for their benefit it is kept on sale at the convent; but we are inclined to think that they are not very intimately acquainted with it. It may, therefore, be worth while to give them some idea of its contents.

A very melancholy air pervades the greater part of the book. None of the songs refer to the early period of Armenian history, when the country was prosperous and free; the glories of the past are mentioned only as a contrast to the humiliations of the present. The voice of a long-subjugated people is heard in many "a doleful song," that is truly "a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong." Exiles driven far away from their native land are mourning over its ruin, and longing for the happy homes they are never to see again; weary travellers are calling on the birds of passage to bring them tidings of their country; bereaved mothers are weeping for sons who have been killed in foreign service, or daughters who have been carried off as the prize of some Turkish or Tartar prince. "Woe to you, poor Armenian people!" sing the emigrants driven out of Ciulfa, near Ararat, into Persia; "you are leaving the tombs of your parents, and abandoning to others your churches and houses. These beautiful fields, great towns, sweet waters, and well-built villages, to whom do you leave them? How happens it that you forget them? Oh that my eyes had been blind, poor Armenia, that so I might not see thee thus." The homesick pilgrim, wandering in distant lands, watches the crane flying overhead, and says:—

Crane, whence dost thou come? I listen for thy answer:

Crane, hast thou no news to give me from my country?

Fly not yet awhile; thou wilt soon find thy companions;

Crane, hast thou no news to give me from my country?

Hither have I come, I have left my fields and vineyards:

Often do I sigh, as though my life were ending:

Crane, thy voice wakes echoes in my heart, stay with me;

Crane, hast thou no news to give me from my country?

One of the poems describes the sorrow of an Armenian maiden of princely race, whose father has given her in marriage to a Tartar chief. Her nurse comes to tell her of her fate, and at first she cannot understand it, but after a time she burst into tears and calls on her attendants to join in her lamentations. "Come to me, weep for my misfortunes. Dark was the day on which I was born. Rise from thy tomb, my mother, and hear the sad tidings of thy daughter. My fate has so determined, and drives me forth into Tartary. O death, carry my soul away! O earth, open and swallow me up!" Then her maidens strive to console her, offering to bear her company in her exile, and the poem ends with the farewell of her aged nurse:—"Sixty years have I sat at thy gate, and I have carried thy father and thy grandfather in my arms, but never have I known so great a sorrow. Whosoever thou goest, always keep steadfast to thy fate. Forget not our Armenian nation, but always assist and protect it. Oh! God be with thee! Farewell!"

The grief of a mother who has lost her child is the subject of several ballads. She delights in finding pet names for the little one who has gone. He was her fragrant rose, her beautiful dove, her graceful antelope. "When he died," she cries, "my sun grew dim, the light of my eyes was obscured, the day became as the night. When this my peacock and lamb left me, my brain was turned; when my dearest little one flew, my mouth was hushed, my ear grew deaf. Yet let me thank God, who received him with the holy boys. O my God, receive the soul of my little one, and place him at rest in the bright heaven!"

One of the most striking poems in the book is "The Lamentation of a Bishop, who, having planted a vineyard, and before it gave fruit, his last day coming, sings thus:—"

Every morning at daybreak,
The nightingale sitting in my vineyard,
Sings sweetly to this my Rose,
"Rise and come from this vineyard."

Every morning at daybreak,
Gabriel says to my soul,
"Rise and come from this vineyard;
From this newly-built vineyard."

Vainly does the Bishop protest against the summons. He implores that he may be allowed to stay yet a little longer in his vineyard, for he has built a wall around it and hedged it in, and he has brought down to it cool waters from the mountains, and planted in it flowers and fruit-trees, roses and

hyacinths, pomegranates and almonds and nuts. Yet he has not gathered flowers there, nor has he tasted its fruits. But all his prayers are useless, and his lamentation concludes with his involuntary submission to the summons of the Angel of Death.

But the songs are not all in a minor key. Some of them are intended to be sung on the occasion of a marriage, and are full of gay imagery and sportive allusions. One of these commences with the address of the bride to her home and her relations:—

Little threshold be not thou shaken :
It is for me to tremble,
To bring lilies.

Little plank be not thou stirred. Little tree tremble not. Little leaf be not thou thrown down. Weep not father and mother; brother and sister weep not. It is for me to weep, to bring lilies.

To the father is given a cup of wine; to the mother a knitting-needle, to the brother a pair of boots, and to the little sister a stick of antimony.

Then the bridegroom enters, and a chorus is sung, in which the family are told to kneel at the altar, and the crane is summoned from the plain, and the duck from the lake, and the partridge from the hill, "to come, and sit, and observe." Then flowers are called for, and the gatherers are ordered to bring such as besit a bridegroom—the balsam and the hyacinth, the lily and the rose. The festivities conclude with the passage of the bride across a little plank laid before the threshold, and the mother is told not to brush away the dust from it, but to keep it as it is, that she may see the traces of her daughter's steps, and remember her when she is far away. The birds which are invited to the marriage feast are great pets of the Armenians, especially the crane and the partridge. Both of them figure repeatedly in these poems, and the crane especially is welcomed by the children, on his return to them after the winter, with just such a joyous greeting as awaits the stork when he re-appears with the spring in many a country of Europe.

The collection also contains a few humorous pieces, of which part of the story of the "Fox, the Wolf, and the Bear" may be taken as a specimen—the quaint rendering of Father Alishan being preserved. It seems that once those three animals made peace, and became "uncles and nephews," the fox turning monk, and the wolf being declared the "pious economist,"

or housekeeper, of the party. They go out together to the chase, the proceeds of which are so unjustly divided by the wolf that the bear grows indignant and strikes out both his eyes. Then—

The fox who saw it was very much frightened,
And, pointing to a trap with cheese, said to the bear,
"My uncle, I have built a fine convent,
It is a retreat, a place of prayer."

The bear extended his paw to take the cheese.
The trap seized his neck on both sides.
"Little fox, my nephew, why do not you help me?
This is not a convent, nor a place of prayer."

The little fox seeing it was much pleased :
He made a funeral service, and prayed for his soul.
"The misery thou didst bring on the wolf has seized thee,
In this retreat, this place of prayer."

O justice, thou pleasest me much !
Whoever hurts his brother soon perishes ;
The bear is obliged to fast in the trap,
It is his retreat, his place of prayer.

From the Spectator, 18th March.

ENGLISH OPINION ON THE INAUGURAL.

ON the 4th inst., the day of inaugurating his second term, President Lincoln read a short State paper, which for political weight, moral dignity, and unaffected solemnity has had no equal in our time. His presidency began, he says, with the effort of both parties to avoid war. "To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend the slave interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union by war, while the Government claimed the right to do no more than restrict the territorial enlargement of it." Both parties "read the same Bible and pray to the same God. Each invokes his aid against the other. . . . The prayer of both cannot be answered, that of neither has been answered fully, for the Almighty has His own purposes." Mr. Lincoln goes on to confess for the North its partnership in the original guilt of slavery:—"Woe unto the world because of offences, for it must needs be that offences come; but woe unto that man by whom the offence cometh!" If we shall suppose American slavery one of those offences which in the providence of God must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, he now wills to remove, and that He gives to both

North and South this terrible war, as was due to those by whom the offence came, we shall not discern that there is any departure from those divine attributes which believers in the living God always ascribe to Him. Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if it be God's will that it continue until the wealth piled by bondsmen by 250 years' unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be repaid by another drawn with the sword, as was said 3,000 years ago, so still it must be said that the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for those who shall have borne the battle, and for their widows and orphans. And with all this let us strive after a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations." No statesman ever uttered words stamped at once with the seal of so deep a wisdom and so true a simplicity. The "village attorney" of whom Sir G. C. Lewis and many other wise men wrote with so much scorn in 1861, seems destined to be one of those "foolish things of the world" which are destined to confound the wise, one of those weak things which shall "confound the things which are mighty."

From the Saturday Review, 18th March.

If it had been composed by any other prominent American politician, it would have been boastful, confident, and menacing. The actual document is mournful, religious, and humble, and it expresses no sentiment of anger or unkindness even to the armed enemies of the Union. The President regards both combatants as the instruments and victims of a just retribution for a common crime. Four years ago, as he says, neither North nor South foresaw coming events, although an insoluble difficulty involved the necessity of war. Both accept the same fundamental faith and morality, and Mr. Lincoln declines to judge his adversaries, in the knowledge that he may himself be judged. His unshaken purpose of continuing the war until it ends in victory assumes the form of resigned submission to the inscrutable decrees of a superior Power. Mr. Lincoln has probably never read Wordsworth's poems, but mournful experience has taught him to reproduce, with remarkable identity

of thought and feeling, the well-known paradox of the poet:—

"Thy most dreaded instrument
For working out a pure intent
Is man arrayed for mutual slaughter:
Yea, Carnage is thy daughter."

There is no reason to doubt Mr. Lincoln's perfect sincerity; and his earnest belief in the doctrines which are held by the great majority of his countrymen will give additional weight to his warning voice.

From the Times, 17 March.

For the first time since the days of Gen. Jackson's immense popularity, an American President has been inaugurated for the second time. The circumstances under which Mr. Lincoln assumes office for another term of four years are so strange and impressive that they may justify an address full of a kind of Cromwellian diction, and breathing a spirit very different from the usual unearnest utterances of successful politicians. This short inaugural speech reveals the disposition and the opinions of the Federal Magistrate more completely than many of the verbose compositions which have proceeded from his predecessors. We cannot but see that the President, placed in the most important position to which a statesman can aspire, invested with a power greater than that of most monarchs, fulfils the duties which destiny has imposed on him with firmness and conscientiousness, but without any feeling of exhilaration at success or sanguine anticipation of coming prosperity.

The brief allusion to the expectations of the two parties during the early days of the war shows what is passing through the mind of the Chief Magistrate when he looks back to four years of slaughter, and turns round to gaze into the black darkness which shrouds the future. All dreaded the war, all sought to avoid it. When the last inaugural address was delivered, secession was but half accomplished. Virginian officers attended President Lincoln for two months after his installation, and many of them left the Federal capital with unwilling hearts to fight in the cause to which they felt themselves bound. This war was not a thing that came suddenly or without deliberation. Everything that could be said for it or against it was freely uttered before the first great armies were in the field. President Buchanan thought it impossible to restrain the action of a State. On the other hand, there had never been wanting

men who told the North that they must keep no terms with slave-owners and traitors.

The mass of the people went into war unwillingly, and yet with but little knowledge of what was before them. "Neither party," says Mr. Lincoln, "expected the magnitude or duration which it has already attained; neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease even before the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astonishing." Mr. Lincoln anticipates that this result will be in favor of his section of the Union; but, warned by experience, he does not venture to predict an early term for the great settlement. In his message of a few months since he gave his opinion that the war would last at least as long as Mr. Jefferson Davis remained at the head of the Southern people. This opinion, so far from being changed by the successes the Federals have since gained, is expressed in even stronger terms on the recent occasion. In a tone of mingled resolution and despondency he prays that the scourge of war may pass away, but professes himself resigned to the infliction of the present evils "until the wealth piled by bondsmen during two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword."

Such language is not unbecoming a man who has been continued in power avowedly that he may persist in a devastating war. Mr. Lincoln has no doubt made up his mind to carry through to the letter the policy which has been indicated in his proclamations and messages. For this he labored during his first term of office; for this, in the worst days of Federal ill-success, he issued his decree for the abolition of Slavery. It was in consequence of his steadfastness on these points that he was re-elected by a great majority, and he could not, if he would, shrink from doing all that he has promised, and which his party expect.

From the Saturday Review.

THE SENSE OF THE RIDICULOUS.

Most educated Englishmen think it a great advantage to have a keen sense of the ridiculous, and the longest consideration will only show that they are right. When the sense of the ridiculous degenerates into

the mere sense of the comic, or of what is conventionally accepted as comic, and becomes a mere aptitude for seeing things and treating them in a jocose way, and getting out of them that most dismal product, marketable fun, then it may be doubted whether the extreme pleasure which this power gives to the comic people and their friends counterbalances the tedium of the public and the degradation of the national intellect. But that power which consists in seizing on the ludicrous side of action and thought, enjoying its genuine and natural manifestations, and so acting and thinking as to avoid that which it is perceived would give a fair ground for ridicule, is a legitimate and desirable result of high cultivation. It is because, in countries like England and France, a nice sense of the ridiculous has been widely diffused by a long civilization and by an accomplished society, that ridicule is an effective weapon against abuses, errors, and vanities which would otherwise be unassailable. It is no use that a man like Sydney Smith should write unless his readers can understand him. The old despotism of France was tempered by epigrams because French society appreciated the epigrams so keenly that those who managed the despotism were affected by the opinion of the society to which they themselves more or less belonged. The present Government of France has most of the epigrammatists against it, although M. About is a brilliant exception; and it has managed, apparently, to defy them. But, although the temporary position of the Empire and the personal character of the Emperor have secured this advantage, there is no saying how long it will last, and future Emperors may be more at the mercy of future wits. The whole scheme of what is called good society, too, rests on the sense of the ridiculous which its members possess, and which suggests to them certain limitations of the extravagance and impertinence to which they are naturally inclined. Valuable, however, as the sense of the ridiculous may be, it is worth observing what great results are attained in the world by persons who are destitute of it, and who succeed simply because they have not got it. When, indeed, we contemplate how great their success is, we are at a loss to say whether it is best to have this sense or not. There is perhaps no other good thing in the world of which it may be said with equal truth that it is very advantageous to have it, and very advantageous not to have it. The German nation, for example, is without any sense of the ridiculous whatever. There are, of course, Germans unlike the rest of their

countrymen; there are Germans whose habits of thought and life have been formed by the action of foreigners; there are Germans who, by genius and cultivation, are European rather than German; there are such un-German Germans as Heine; but the mass of decent, respectable, educated Germans are simply without any sense whatever of the ridiculous; and yet the Germans are a wonderful, a great, and an admirable people. When we see how uncommonly well these foxes get on without tails, we are almost tempted to ask ourselves whether the tail on which we pride ourselves is really any addition to our happiness or comfort.

Nothing, according to English notions, can be more ridiculous than the life of a German professor. To mention a German professor, is indeed, with most of us, to laugh at him. He is a curious being. He lives in a poky flat; his wife does the cooking and washing; he is absurd enough to like cabbage dressed after the fashion of his country, instead of eating, like a Briton, the simple vegetable as nature made it, and with the water in which it was boiled nicely preserved in its dripping leaves. He never gets on in the world, and he smokes all day and most of the night. It must be allowed that no human being, not even a Turk or an English ensign, can smoke anything like a German professor. A really practised and hardened German professor will not only smoke during every other moment of his waking hours, but he will smoke all through his dinner, taking alternately a mouthful of food and a mouthful of smoke. Then what does he do in this life of incessant and protracted study? He very likely studies metaphysics, and modern Englishmen know how ridiculous that is. He spends years in identifying or in discriminating between Thinking and Being, or in proving that Being and Not-being are the same, or that they are not the same, and if not, why not, and how otherwise. At the end of his life Being and Not-being are just where they were, and nobody knows or cares to know any more about them. People with a sense of the ridiculous have seen that metaphysics are a cobweb, a will-o'-the-wisp, a dream, a silly puzzle, and so forth, and yet the poor Professor has gone on grinding at them till his last pipe has been smoked out. Then, again, if a German gets hold of a detail which interests him, he pursues it into a thousand ramifications. He does not much mind how small it is, or whether there is any particular evidence to guide his inquiries. He goes burrowing on and on, without a

purpose or a hope, but with a simple sort of folly, just as people in England go from one evening party to another. Nor does he much mind if his metaphysical theories or his search after details lead him to conclusions that are rather shocking. People with a sense of the ridiculous can see how foolish it is to undermine the great fabric of society, to sap the foundations of our faith, to induce a general restlessness of mind, and so on; but he does not mind, any more than a worm that pierces a hole in a ship minds the possibility of vexing the captain and spoiling the clothes of the passengers. Or perhaps he may not be much of a philosopher, and his thoughts may be rather turned to poetry, to legends, or art. Then, again, how foolish he is there, how sentimental, how unreal, how nonsensical, with his longings of the soul, with his inner meanings, and his ever-near spirit-world! Moonstruck is the very mildest epithet that can be applied to him, and very few sensible Englishmen, we fear, would call him a fool without putting a strengthening epithet before the term. He has been born, he has lived, he has thought, he has written, and he has died, without any more sense of the ridiculous than a Hottentot, or Mr. Tupper, or his own inkstand. And yet to him, and to such as he is, Europe owes some of the rarest and most precious elements of modern civilization. From German metaphysicians there is drawn, or at least by their labours is greatly augmented, that stream of high thought, of ideas, of tentative hypotheses on great subjects, which raises men above mere utilitarianism, and enables one generation to guess the secrets of the future reserved for other generations to be born. To the German love of detail we owe in a great measure that habit of patient accuracy which has displayed itself so admirably in the niceties of modern scholarship, and in the delicacy of scientific analysis. In Germany, and in Germany alone, is there found a tolerance of truth apart from the conclusions to which the search of truth may lead. And sentimental Germany has offered a kind and loving home to all that is emotional in art and thought; it has allowed the feelings to expand without the chilling air of prosaic sense to nip them; and it has always reserved the claims of that kind of poetry which expresses and develops, even if it exaggerates, the softer and tenderer aspirations of the heart.

The Germans are equally absurd in their family life. They have no notion of concealing their feelings, or of hiding their love and their respect for each other. They do not mind, as we should mind, exhibiting them-

selves on sentimental occasions, and taking the world into family secrets. They are too innocent and simple-hearted to mind being stared at, and it must have been the cold of the climate that first made the nation begin to wear clothes. There is no end to the events of family life which they feel called on to celebrate. There is always a silver wedding, or a golden wedding, or a betrothal day, or a birthday, or something of the kind to make a feast about. They rush up and kiss and hug each other at railway-stations. They insist, against the evidence of their senses, in seeing venerable patriarchs in their fathers, and hero-forms in their brothers. They calmly show strangers a series of family photographs, and explain that this uncle is a most honoured man; that this aunt is a woman of irrepressible emotions; that the tall sister is universally considered loveliness itself, and the short sister has had a heart-pang. They have no sense of the proportions of outer things when any of those they love are concerned. Young people who had long loved in an unrecognized way have been formally betrothed before now, because the lover has been in the Prussian army, and his regiment has been ordered on the appalling service of marching into Hesse-Cassel. It seems, to persons unacquainted with Germany, perfectly unaccountable that Prussians, who consider themselves to belong to one of the great nations of Europe, should be proud of Düppel. At first their language seems as if it must be meant as a joke; and then the suspicion arises that they are boasting in order to hurt the feelings of outsiders, and especially of Englishmen. But the truth is that there is neither any wish to joke or to wound. They quite mean what they say, but they speak from the side of the family affections. A battle in which a brother or a lover has been is always a great battle to girls. The home circle always exaggerates the importance of what its members do. No sisters would be worth anything if, the first time their little brother went out with the hounds, their hearts did not bound with rapture to hear that "their Jemie" got safely over the first fence; and the Prussians, in the same simple, natural way, were honestly delighted that their Jemies got so safely over Düppel. They have no conception how any one could laugh at them for this feeling; and they would not care if they were ridiculed for it, any more than a girl who was proud of her brother would mind being laughed at for it by her schoolfellows. So, too, a young German couple let all mankind see their happiness without any blushing or reserve, or

nonsensical modesty. And no place is better to watch them than on board ship; because, as everybody sees everybody there, people must be either very shy, or not shy at all. The young Germans soon produce the conviction that they do not even know what shyness is. It never occurs to them that they can be the subject of jokes; and they will sit for hours on deck, with their hands clasped, looking into each other's eyes, before all who care to look at them. There is a complete want of the sense of the ridiculous in all this; but then it must be owned, the Germans have something to set on the other side. They get much more out of family life than other people do. They are always having events of some interest occurring to them. They live in an atmosphere of serene and contented love. They enjoy many pleasures longer, if not more profoundly, than others do. If people would find it satisfactory to sit hand-in-hand for hours in public, but refrain because they think they would look foolish, evidently they go without a pleasure which, if they had been less sensitive to the opinion of others, they might have freely enjoyed. The happiness of family affection is more diffused in Germany than elsewhere, because, in the first place, the fear of ridicule places no restriction on it, and secondly, because it gains strength by the mere fact that it is habitually unrestricted.

From the Reader.

MARRIAGE AMONG SAVAGES.

Primitive Marriage. An Inquiry into the Origin of the Form of Capture in Marriage Ceremonies. By John F. McLennan, M. A., Advocate. (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black. 1865.)

THIS curious and able monograph is due to an inquiry into the early history of society, in the course of which the "Form of Capture" in marriage ceremonies came to be investigated. This led the author into a wide field of ethnological research, and to the remarkable results which we shall proceed to explain.

The "Form of Capture" is the custom that exists in a vast number of tribes and peoples, of the bridegroom carrying the bride to his home by a make-believe display of stratagem or force. The marriage having been agreed upon, the theft or abduction follows by usage, as a concerted matter of form, in order to make good the

marriage. The "Form of Capture" was observed in Sparta, where the bridegroom, according to Plutarch, always carried off the bride by feigned violence. Such also was the case in those plebeian marriages in Rome, that were not constituted by "Confarreatio" or "Coemptio." And such is the case in a most extraordinary number of peoples at the present day; Hindus, Kal mucks, Bedouins, Africans, Terra del Fuegians, and so forth; and among a still larger number in ancient times. It is a custom at once Indo-European, Turanian, and Semitic. The frequency of its occurrence strongly suggests that the phase of society in which it originated must have been found, at some time or other, almost everywhere.

What was the nature of this phase? Can we find instances where the bride is won by the reality and not by the form of abduction? Most assuredly so. Take the familiar case of the Australian, who being prevented by strict custom from marrying among his own people, hunts for a wife as he would for any other game, and, having found a likely lass, he steals up behind her, tells her to follow him, and if she does not, he knocks her down with his club, and carries her off in triumph. We find that wives are regularly captured by fraud or by force in America, in New Zealand, in many of the islands of the Pacific, and in various parts of Asia and Europe. To such an extent is this practised by the Caribs, that, according to Humboldt, the women in every tribe are foreigners, and unable to converse in the same language as the men.

"Olaus Magnus represents the tribes of the North as having been continually at war with one another, either on account of stolen women or with the object of stealing women, 'propter raptas virgines aut arripiendas.' His brother Johannes dilates on the same topic and mentions numerous cases in which the plunderers were of the royal houses of Denmark or Sweden. As did the kings, so did their subjects. Among the Scandinavians, before they became Christians, wives were almost invariably fought for and wedded at the sword-point. In Sweden, even long after the introduction of Christianity, women were often carried off when on the way to the church to be married. A wedding cortege was a party of armed men, and, for greater security, marriages were generally celebrated at night. A pile of lances is said to be still preserved in the ancient church of Husaby, in Gothland, into which were fitted torches; these weapons were borne by the groomsmen, and served the double purpose of giving light and protection. Such a prevalence of lawlessness, existing after the introduc-

tion of Christianity and comparative civilization, helps us to conceive what the habits of these people were in a more primitive age."

The universality of this custom of wife-stealing, in very savage countries, is a striking fact, the tradition of which is perpetuated by the "Form of Capture," in those that are becoming civilized. We next have to inquire why it is that savages prefer to steal their wives at great risk from other tribes instead of taking them quietly from their own. This is our author's strong point. He asserts, on ample evidence, that in the rudest state of society, the law is found to be almost universal, that men should not marry in their own tribes. It follows that as savages are always at war, the wife must be captured, not won by bargain or by persuasion.

The rule that forbids marriage within the tribe or group of kindred, is absolute in a vast number of cases. It is considered incestuous, and is punished by death, among the Khonds; it is abominated by the Circassians, whose fraternities sometimes embrace thousands of persons, between whom marriage is totally prohibited by ancient law. Such is the case, also, with the Samoyeds; and so is it enacted by the institutes of Menu, where marriage among people of the same family name is forbidden: as though in Scotland, a Fraser might not marry a Fraser, nor a M'Intosh a M'Intosh. Again we have the totems of North America, the tribes or castes of the Australians, and even, as it now appears, a similar custom existed among the ancient Highlanders of Scotland. What then is the origin of this widely spread tendency to discourage marriage between members of the same tribe? Mr. McLennan insists that the earliest relation between the sexes, and the most archaic state of civil society, were not based on polygamy and male descent, but upon polyandry and female kinship. The number of instances of polyandry obtaining among tribes of the present day, is unexpectedly great. They have been collected with great diligence by the author, and are mainly ascribed by him to a deficiency in females, due to the custom of female infanticide. It is troublesome to rear a girl who, after all, is no accession to the strength of the tribe; because the young men may just as well capture a stranger whom other people have had the pains of bringing up. Moreover, the possession of marriageable daughters is a temptation to raids and robbery. Consequently a savage could not marry at all,

unless he procured his wife from a distance. It would be a creditable thing that he should do so, whether by favour, force, or fraud; for he would thereby add a new family to the strength of his tribe. Mr. M'Lennan thinks it would soon grow into a usage that a man should never marry among his own people. A prejudice would be established against doing so, strong as a principle of religion, as every prejudice relating to marriage is apt to be. We cannot obtain direct evidence of the habits of man in his most primitive state, because a really primitive people exists nowhere. For many thousands of years the various races of men have been making progress under schooling of experience. Notwithstanding this, we find polyandry and female infanticide to be widely in existence at this very moment. Polyandry is found universally in Thibet, among the Coorgs of Mysore, and the Nairs of Malabar. It is also found on the Indian coast of Ceylon, and, as a custom not wholly obsolete, in New Zealand; in the Aleutian Islands; among the Saporogian Cossacks; and in many districts of Africa and America. When Great Britain was invaded by Cæsar, the habit of polyandry was universal.

Polyandry implies kinship through females only. Thus among the Nairs the woman, according at least to one authority, has her own house; and her husbands, who visit her in rotation, are selected under certain restrictions as to rank, caste, and number, which may not exceed twelve. No Nair knows his father, and every man looks on his sister's children as his ultimate heirs. He behaves towards them with the same fondness that fathers in other parts of the world exhibit to their own children. Brothers almost always live under the same roof; a man's movable property is divided at his death among his sister's children, but if there are lands, they fall to the surviving brother. This appears, according to Mr. M'Lennan, to be the rudest form of family system with which we are acquainted, and from which, by a natural process of evolution, our modern systems of marriage and heirship have been derived. He shows abundantly, that the custom soon obtains, of brothers, and brothers alone, sharing the same wife; the eldest brother being the especial protector of the woman. Then we pass through the Jewish stage, where polyandry no longer exists; but it has become a matter of usage or law, when the husband dies childless, for the next brother to take the widow, the property, and the wife going

together. As the people become more civilized, and the sexes are left to their natural equality, in point of numbers, monogamy or polygamy appears among the wealthy, accompanied by a descent of property through the males, with polyandry and the remains of female kinship, among the poor.

Mr. M'Lennan's book is crammed with ethnological facts, most lucidly grouped and rigorously reasoned upon. It was written primarily from a lawyer's point of view, as an inquiry into the origin of civil society; but the work is eminently an acquisition to ethnological science. His theory is most ingenious and doubtless contains a great amount of truth, but he does not seem to us to have allowed quite enough influence, in his arguments, to the feelings of jealousy among the males, even in the most archaic forms of human society; nor has he discussed as he might well have done by way of illustration, the habits of polygamy and polyandry among gregarious animals.

REGIONS AROUND THE NORTH POLE.

On the 25th of February a very crowded meeting of the members of the Royal Geographical Society was held at Burlington House, to hear a paper read by the secretary, Mr. Markham, on the "Origin and Migrations of the Greenland Esquimaux," having reference to the probability of an open sea round the North Pole, and especially to hear the remarks of Captain Sherard Osborn on a more lengthy paper by Dr. Petermann, advocating the dispatch of another Polar expedition. Sir Roderick Murchison took the chair, and the room was crowded by all the chief members of the society.

In the first paper read, the secretary proceeded briefly, after expressing an earnest hope that the expedition proposed by Captain Osborn would yet be carried out, to show his (Mr. Markham's) reasons for believing that the unexplored regions to the north were, even up to the very Pole itself, not improbably supporting a small and scattered population. The migrations of men within the Arctic zone gave rise to questions closely connected with the geography of the undiscovered portions of the Arctic regions, and those questions could only be solved by a scientific Polar expedition. Until the last nine centuries, the great continent of Greenland was untenanted by a single human being, and there was a still more remote period when trees clothed the hill sides of Dis-

co, and groves waved in a milder climate over Banksland and Melville Island, and corals and sponges flourished in the now frozen waters of Barrow's Straits. There was a later period, when the Norseman held the land against the old proprietors of the soil, the Esquimaux, who had come from the wilds of Siberia. The last glimpse of the Norsemen showed them living in two districts, divided into villages; but when, after a long lapse of years, Greenland was again visited, all trace of the Norseman had disappeared, save a few Runic inscriptions extending as far north as Upernavik, some ruins, and the broken church bells of Gardar. The cradle of the Esquimaux race was in Central Asia, though even those wandering tribes had doubtless found other tribes of natives before them. There was ample geographical evidence that a large tract unexplored in the Arctic regions was occupied by land. The awful ice found on the north-western shore of Prince Patrick's Island showed it to be the accumulation of years, and therefore in a virtually land-locked sea—locked to the north, as well as south, east, and west. All the chief Arctic explorers had found remains of huts, fox-traps, and horns of animals on Baring, Byam Martin, Melville, Bathurst, and Cornwallis Islands, which enabled them to trace the route taken by those early wanderers in search of the means of sustaining life, step by step, along the whole length of the Parry group from Baring Island to Cape Warrender. It was on the coast of Greenland that they at length found a resting-place. Part went south, and, driving out the Norsemen, peopled Greenland; while part, he believed, wandered still further north, where the required conditions for their existence might be attainable. All their traditions spoke to there being an iceless sea in the far north, and open water was life to Esquimaux. Such a people would be completely isolated, and, on account of their habits, manners, language, and mode of life, would be to many one of the most valuable results of the contemplated Polar expedition; and this was but one out of many branches of knowledge which would be enriched and advanced by future North Polar explorers.

At the conclusion of the paper, Captain Osborn, who was very warmly welcomed by the meeting, rose to read a brief abstract from Dr. Petermann's communication on the subject of Polar exploration, a paper which the gallant captain said was much too long to read *in extenso*, but was still so valuable that the society were determined

to print it among the regular papers. The learned doctor strongly recommended that all future attempts to penetrate to the Pole should be made from the Spitzbergen side rather than from Smith's Sound, and he supported his views in favour of this route on the ground that the sea there would, he believed, be found to be almost free from ice. England, which had done so much to promote the maritime interests of the world, should again be the first to take the lead in this great branch of geographical discovery, for it was only from her great resources in men and ships that a solution of the problem could be looked for. Captain Osborn, in referring to the heads of this paper, said he did not at all wish to oppose Dr. Petermann's theory that there was an open sea round the Pole, for the learned doctor was by no means alone in that opinion, Professor Maury holding it also. He, as a sailor, thought they were both right in so believing, though he also thought that the water could not be reached except at a certain time when all navigation was at an end. He did not think, however, that the whole of the 150,000,000 square miles of unknown Polar regions was water, and for that, among other things, he was anxious for an expedition to set the question at rest. With another expedition there was every chance of most successful explorations being made, and a certainty of the return of those who took part in it—a certainty which he believed, however, would not be so great if Dr. Petermann's route by Spitzbergen were chosen; and he was therefore naturally of opinion that the route by Smith's Sound was so far much preferable. The service to which he had the honour to belong had been in a state of peace for ten years, and he was anxious that young and energetic men should be allowed to go and win their promotion, and in doing so promote at the same time the ends of science; and he regarded it as the duty of the Geographical Society and of the public to urge on the Government in that direction. He quite denied that there was any real danger to be feared from these expeditions if properly organized and commanded, and he referred to the case of Dr. Rae, who had been supported by the natives for months. There would certainly be no lack of volunteers for such an expedition, and he believed one English admiral was prepared to lead, if necessary, a squadron by Spitzbergen to the North Pole. (Hear, hear.) McClinck and Allen Young, and many others whom he could name, were perfectly ready to go at once. He (Captain Osborn) had

been told he must point out where the funds were to come from; but with that he could have nothing to do. The nation gave £10,000,000 a year to the navy, and in the last ten years had spent no less than £150,000,000 on it, though, after all this, the fighting vessels which they yet possessed might be counted on the fingers' ends. (Much laughter.) Of this great sum, £500,000 only had gone to the scientific departments of the profession—not more than the 230th part of the whole amount. He should certainly like to have more than that spent, especially when, even of that sum, money was taken in one case for a cricket-ground, or in others spent in the wages of servants at various establishments. In conclusion, he urged upon the society to do all in its power to work upon public opinion in favour of another expedition to the North Polar regions.

Professor Owen, in reply to a request from the chairman, briefly pointed out the benefits which were likely to accrue to the science of zoology if an open sea round the Pole were reached. He thought it was the duty of the Government not to rest as long as there was a part of the world which ought to be observed, but which had not been visited at all. The unfortunate termination of two of the expeditions had rather alarmed the public mind on these matters, but he thought there was no real ground for fear if the expeditions were equipped and furnished by the aid of the experience which had been acquired by more recent Arctic investigations.

After a few brief observations from Lord Houghton and Captain Maury, both of whom strongly supported the idea of a fresh expedition to the North Pole, the proceedings terminated with the usual routine votes of thanks.

From the Economist, 11th March.

THE PREMATURE EXPECTATIONS OF AN AMERICAN WAR.

Of all our national peculiarities there is not one more perplexing, or to sensible business men more annoying, than the national liability to panic. It disturbs everything, and it is as difficult to account for it as to foresee its occurrence. If we were a timorous people, or a weak people, or a people without organization, there might be some reason for over watchfulness, for that imaginative depression which every now and then seizes upon the whole community. But that one

of the most powerful nations in the world, which always rises to war with a kind of heavy readiness, which is at this moment strongly organized, with a great fleet and a full treasury, should be suddenly penetrated with the sense of an invisible danger, so penetrated as to buy and sell under the influence of alarm, is certainly a curious phenomenon. It recurs, however, periodically, and almost always produces mischief. The wild fear of Russian designs cost us the war in Afghanistan and the disaster which first shook our hold over the Sepoy army; the alarm created by the military strength of the French Empire almost broke up the alliance which for twelve years has kept the world in order; the senseless dread of Roman aggression undid the work of thirty years by reviving the suspicions which keep the English and Irish creeds so incessantly jarring; the alarm of 1861 has cost us millions, and the present one may precipitate a war which, of all wars, would be the most injurious to commerce and civilization. It is high time to ask the middle class of this country upon what ground it expects an immediate attack from the United States.

We say immediate attack because the gist of the absurdity lies in this matter of time. It is, of course, quite possible that the United States may at some future period see fit to attack us, France may see fit, or Russia, and it is quite wise to take all reasonable precautions. The American people speaking unfortunately the same language as ourselves can understand all our criticisms and can reply by boasts equally intelligible to ourselves; and criticisms and boasts together produce much exasperation of feeling. Our frontiers, too, march together for many hundreds of miles, and the Government of Washington is therefore exposed to one of the most powerful of all temptations to war, the chance of acquiring large and valuable territories which would greatly increase its naval power. It is probable too that at no very distant time the American Government will find itself an extremely strong one, possessed of a great fleet, levying a great taxation, disposing of armies large and numerous as those of every democratic State have throughout all history become. These are ample reasons for precaution, for looking to our arms, scrutinizing our resources, and mending any visibly weak point in the fence. But what is there in these reasons to make us imagine that the crisis is coming now?

At this moment the American Government is engaged in the prosecution of a very great, very costly, and peculiarly dangerous

civil war. That war has been raging for four years, has cost 500,000,000L., and has by no means reached its termination. So far as English observers can perceive, the course of events is running steadily in favour of the older and more regular Government, but the work is not accomplished, or the "rebellion" even in appearance subdued. The South has still to yield, will probably not yield without another campaign, and when it has officially yielded there will still be left work to do from which the greatest statesmen even might shrink with a sense of incompetence. There is a vast territory to pacify and clear of the brigandage which, though little noticed in England, is probably the very worst legacy of the war; there is a great subject race to emancipate and organize, so that it shall be free, yet not cease to labour, be independent, yet not provoking to races stronger than itself; there is a grand financial crisis to be met in some way or other, some revolutionary or regular, but at all events difficult way; and above all there is that collapse to be faced which follows always on the success of any very great or persistent effort. Finally there is the constitution to be amended, so as to reconcile the two leading ideas of the nation which lives under it, their respect for a Federation and their desire for a great and permanent Republic, "one and indivisible." All these are pressing necessities which will be felt more and more strongly as the war now raging draws nearer to its close, and all require a concentration of purpose and strength fatal to the idea of a voluntary foreign war.

Why do we expect that all these objects will be laid aside in order to enjoy the luxury of punishing England for allowing two or three steamers to reach the Confederates, or conquering Canada, and so adding to a vast and disaffected territory at the South another vast and disaffected territory at the North? Because the American journals threaten it? So did the French journals immediately after the Bernard trial, but without producing a war. Because Mr. Adams almost declared it, in order to prevent the departure of the rams built for the Confederates? The war at that moment would hardly have added to American difficulties, for a number of the rams could have broken the blockade almost as easily as if they had been part of Her Majesty's fleet, and we had no means of invading the States by land. Because inadmissible demands are to be made about the losses caused by the Alabama? That is merely a pretext for war to be put forward if the Government of Washington on general grounds desires it,

but not otherwise, and, as Mr. Layard assures us has been for many months laid aside. Because the Americans covet Canada? They do not covet it more than they have always done; indeed, they covet it rather less, for they have less evidence that the Canadians will like the change, and the first difficulty of their Government is that, to exist as it stands, each separate State must yield to the Central Power at least a quiescent obedience. American politicians are not very deep thinkers, but they are at least aware how much more easy and pleasant it would be to buy Canada,—that is to offer to its people commercial and other advantages to induce them to come in, than to sow the seeds of permanent irritation by a war of conquest. At all events, they will scarcely seek to undertake a task very large, very dangerous, and very doubtful; which if it fails will cost them half a century of prosperity, and if it succeeds will upset all existing party calculations, and add three millions of people to the party hostile to the predominant one, while engaged on other work so absorbing as the pacification of the South.

But may not American statesmen be tempted to avoid all the complexities they foresee by a great foreign war. Possibly, if they could thereby avoid them, but they could not. War with Great Britain would not help to pacify the South, but rather to give new life to half-smothered elements of resistance; it would not enable them to reduce their armies, but compel them to increase them both North and South; it would not enable them to settle their serf question, but rather increase the difficult element in that question, the need for arming the blacks; it would not increase the Federal authority over States, but add six or seven States to the number disposed to look with suspicion on Federal prerogative; above all, it would not remove but enhance their financial difficulties; for, even assuming the war to be used as an excuse for repudiation, repudiation could not be attempted during the war, because, if it were, the consequent distrust would paralyze the supply of men and materials to the armies. Armies can be maintained after a fashion by requisitions, but not in a country like Canada; and fleets cannot be so maintained at all. Even, therefore, assuming what is not proved, that Mr. Lincoln is capable of the colossal wickedness of covering the world with war to escape internal perplexities, it is not the visible or immediate interest of his administration as it stands, will be still less its interest when that administration begins to feel

the pressure of the restored Southerners, who will be by no means too anxious to give to the Northern section of the Republic a permanent, a visible, and an irresistible preponderance of force. Americans, when not excited by threats, or interruptions to their great dream of covering a continent, look pretty keenly to their interests, and it is not the interests of the seventeen millions of farmers who go to make up the bulk of the Northern population to avoid payment of the scrip which they hold, and the currency they are relying on, by plunging into a second war while the first one is barely over, to stop emigration just when it is wanted

most, and arrest the sale of oil, cotton, and wheat just when they begin to bring in the profits which are to recoup the expenditure of the struggle. National irritation may be too strong for any of these considerations, but they are permanent, while irritation is temporary; and at all events till the South has yielded, there is no reason for the alarm now so visible, and which, with Englishmen, is so apt to result in ill-advised or passionate action. Our trade may have to sustain the terrible calamity of an American war, but that is no reason for prematurely accepting the next greatest calamity, — a long suspense under the conviction.

"THE RASH VOW."

A BED, four walls, and a swart crucifix —
Nought else, save my own brain and four small words!

Four scorpions! which, instead of cloistered death,

Have stung me into life! How long may't be
Since silver censers flung their incense up,
And in full choir a sound of voices rose,
Chanting their even-song, and praising God —
"In that our brother here was dead, and lives?"
Then came the organ's surging symphony,
And I, a unit 'midst the tansured crowd,
Passed on, a monk; while in my ear there rung
Those four short, burning words, "She was not false!"

Oh! fiend incarnate, that could urge me on,
E'en to the very brink and see me plunge —
Then, seeing, whisper what would else have saved
A life-long misery.

They brought me here
To pray, and keep the Vigil of St. John;
To make thanksgiving — What was it he said,
The reverend preacher who discoursed to-day?
"Many indeed are called, but chosen few."
Chosen! and this the Vigil of St. John,
When trembling maidens to the fountain come
To view their future husbands mirrored there:
She, too, perhaps, may be amidst the throng?
Ah! me, I shall go mad. How long is it
Since I have grovelled here? It seems to me
Well nigh a life-time since they came and brought

The dim oil-lamp, that flickers near my head.
How heavily their flabby, naked feet
Came whilom flapping through the corridor!
"Our brother prays," quoth one; the other said,
(Poking the lamp's wick with his finger-tip)
"In truth I marvel not that he is moved;
An angel's self might have been stirred to hear
My Lord the Bishop as he preached to-day."
Poor souls! if they could but have read my heart,
It would have seared even *their* inert gross flesh
Into a flame of fear. I recollect,
On my young sister *Isa's* wedding day,
Our mother smiled, and said it brought to her
Again the freshness of her buried youth.
Great God! see! here is my own youth, unspent,
Living a death. Alas! no more for me
The silvery laughter of fair mirthful girls,
Like distant bells across the breezy downs;

No more the soft hands' thrilling touch, that sends
The young hot life-blood rushing through the veins;

Never again that interchange of looks.

The key-note of two souls in union.

"Out! puling mourner," cries the moralist:

"Is it a 'crumpled rose-leaf in thy path'?

O'er which thou walest? — what is youth and love? —

Hast thou not in thee something more than these,
Thy soul, immortal, indestructible?"

The words are but too true; though 'tis no "leaf;"

'Tis the whole flower I mourn, and mourn alone.

A young rose, dewy, budding in the morn —

I weep its fragrance lost, its beauty gone.

Life without love is nought, — 'tis even as

The body without soul — a fleshy case

To carry aches and pains in. Soon will come

The first white hair, the harbinger of change,

To say, Time is, Time was, and Time is past.

Ay, past! for, love extinct, our life remains

(As 'twere a hearth where fire had blazed anon)

In ashes, and my youth is left to me

Like a pressed violet in a folded book;

A remnant of its fragrance breathing still,

To tell of spring-time past, ne'er to return.

Last May I roved with *her* into the woods:

The winter season o'er, the tender buds

Were shooting on the ash; the scent of Spring

Was round us, over us, and in our hearts;

The firmament a tender turquoise blue;

The cushat-dove was cooing in the grove;

All nature seemed as wooing, where we strayed

Along the sylvan glade. We passed the cairn,

The old gray lichen-covered, mossy stones,

Where conies sport and graze, and at the foot

Of a tall chestnut-tree, upon a couch

Bedecked with primroses and branching ferns

(I at her feet), we sate. Anon there came

Athwart the thick and leafy canopy

Above us spread (now rich with vernal bloom),

A golden sunbeam, whose bright quivering ray,

Touching her brow with living amber glow,

And glancing on her deep, dark, liquid eyes,

Well-springs of truth and maiden purity —

Who calls? "Good brother, you are new as yet;

'Tis time for matins. All the brotherhood

Are now assembled, and the Prior waits:

Will't please you come?"

THOS. HERBERT LEWIN.

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